THE WIRE 467 | JANUARY 2023

WIRE

ADVENTURES IN SOUND AND MUSIC | INDEPENDENT SINCE 1982

2022 Rewind

THE YEAR IN UNDERGROUND MUSIC

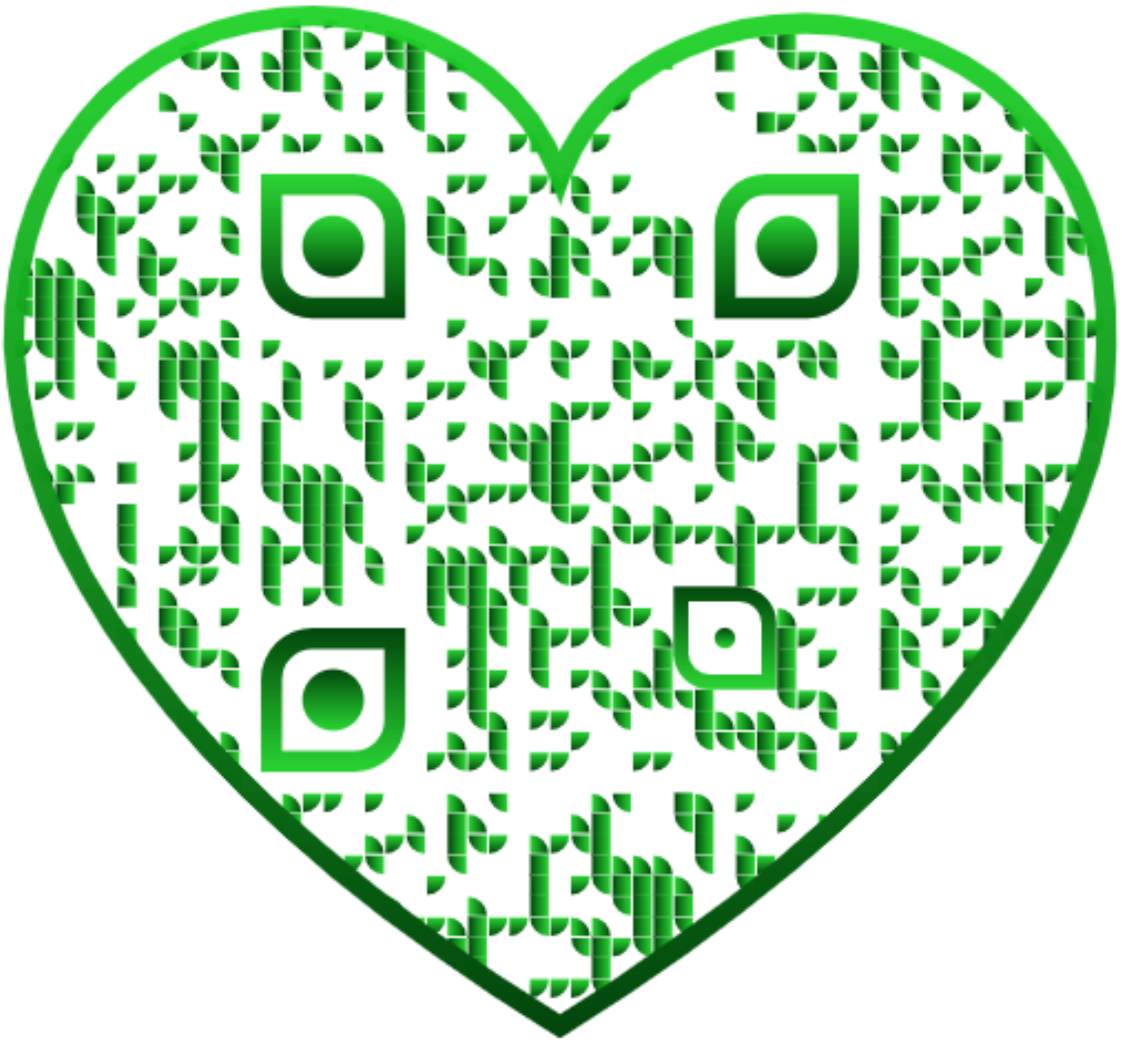
CHARTS
REFLECTIONS
ANALYSES

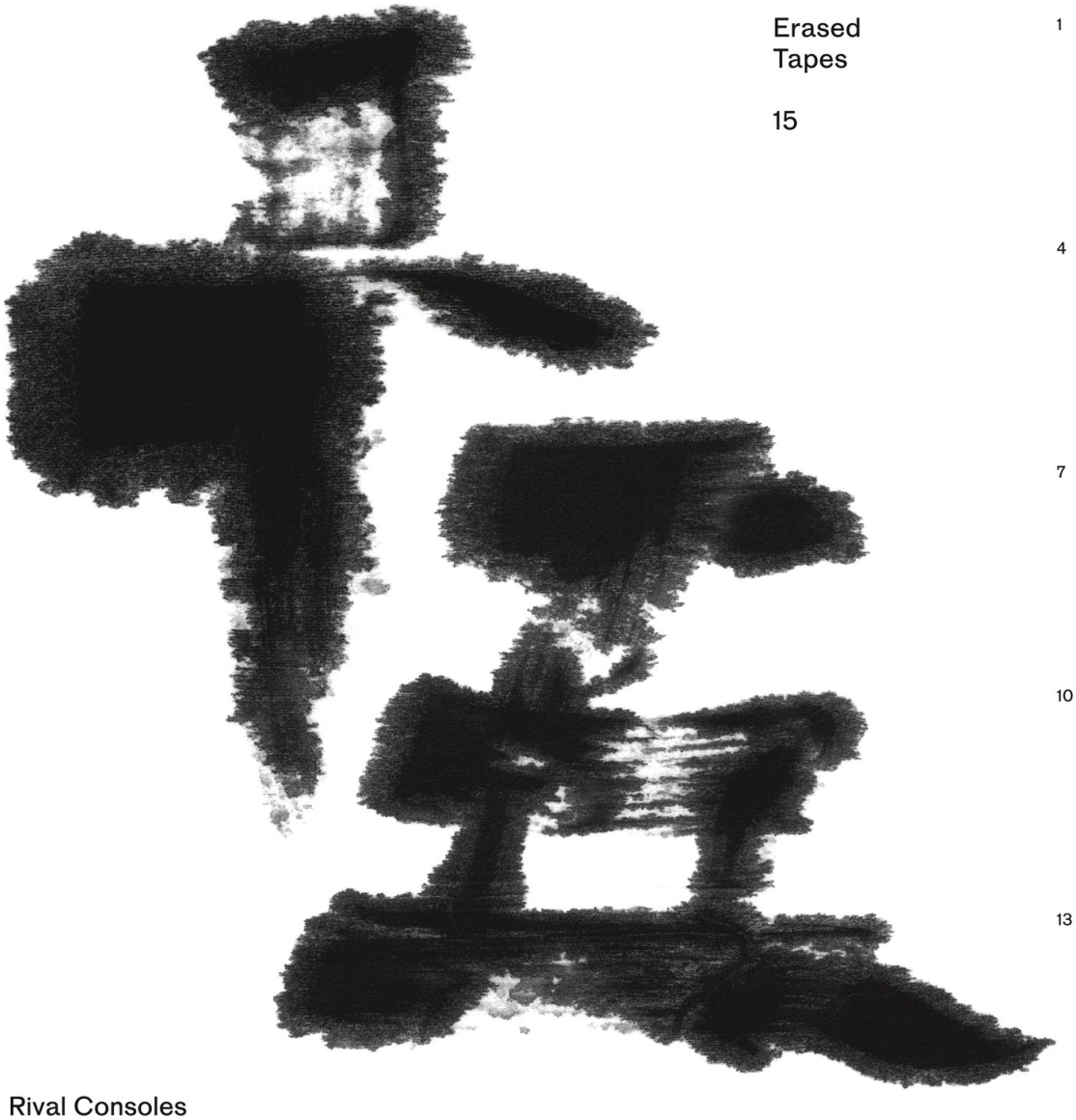
NEW TURNTABLISTS
SONIC PRANKSTERS
ENVIRONMENTAL AGENTS
SOUND HEALERS
MUSIC IN IRAN & UKRAINE

Kali Malone | Venus Ex Machina
Satoko Fujii | Celtic Frost

THE WIRE 467 | JANUARY 2023
£5.95 | 9 770952 068120 01

2022 Rewind | The year in underground music





Erased
Tapes

15

1 2

3

4 5

6

7 8

9

10 11

12

13 14

Rival Consoles

The Art Ensemble of Chicago

Moor Mother

Hatis Noit

Bell Orchestre

Anne Müller

Colin Stetson

Lubomyr Melnyk

Masayoshi Fujita

Crayon

Daniel Brandt

Penguin Cafe

Ben Lukas Boysen

Peter Broderick

Kiasmos

Roedelius & Story

Qasim Naqvi

Daniel Thorne

Kevin Richard Martin

Michael Price

Douglas Dare

3LP set

Shards

out now

David Allred

erasedtapes.com

Nils Frahm

Inside

The Wire 467 | January 2023

Reviews

60 **Reviews Index**

61 **Soundcheck**
New vinyl, CDs, downloads and streams, plus reissues and specialist columns, including:

63 **Satoko Fujii**
Piano magic. By Phil Freeman

69 **Leslie Keffer**
Queen of noise. By Raymond Cummings

83 ***Children Of The Stones***
Monumental nostalgia. By Richard Thomas

88 **Print Run**
New music books, including:

88 ***Tune In, Turn On, Drift Off***
A history of ambient music's psychedelic past. By Raymond Cummings

92 **On Screen**
New films and DVDs: James Sharp's *The Jangling Man: The Martin Newell Story*; Alexandra Cabral & Ian Svenonius's *The Lost Record*

94 **On Location**
Recent festivals, gigs and clubs, including:

97 **Anthony Braxton + Henry Threadgill's Zooid**
The veteran bandleaders at the London Jazz Festival. By Gabriel Bristow

99 **On Site**
Recent art events: Carolee Schneemann: *Body Politics*

Features

10 **Unlimited Editions**
REC-on

10 **Unofficial Channels**
Xenwiki

12 **Heith**
The Milanese producer looks to magickal traditions. By Miloš Hroch

14 **Venus Ex Machina**
Cybernetics meet mythology for the researcher and composer. By Meg Woof

16 **Kraus**
New Zealand psych wizard goes for a float. By Kiran Dass

18 **Daniel Bachman**
The American Primitive guitarist chronicles climate crisis. By Louis Pattison

Global Ear

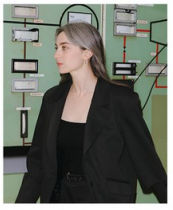
20 **Kadıköy**
The Istanbul neighbourhood is the home for metal and underground music. By Robert Rigney

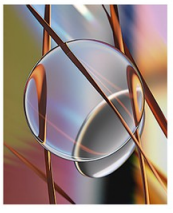
87 **The Inner Sleeve**
Gaye Su Akyol on Morphine's *Good*

114 **Epiphanies**
Meg Baird on Sheila Kay Adams and John Cohen

Invisible Jukebox

22 **Kali Malone**
Our mystery record selection pulls out all the stops for the composer and organist. Tested by Derek Walmsley





31 **2022 Rewind: the year in underground music**

32 **Releases Of The Year**
We asked our contributors to nominate their top ten records, CDs, downloads and streams of the year, then we added up the votes

38 **Critics' Reflections**
Wire writers discuss their cultural highs and lows for 2022

39 **The New Vaudeville**
Funny games. By Stewart Smith

41 **Turntablists**
Spin cycles. By Rob Turner

43 **Columnists' Charts**
Our specialist critics excavate all crevices of the culture for this year's most exciting music, from hiphop to modern composition

49 **Books, Films & Events**
Emily Bick surveys the year in print, cinema, audiovisual arts and live performance

51 **Climate**
Burning issues. By Phil England

52 **Healing Sounds**
Good vibrations. By Emily Pothast

53 **Archive Releases Of The Year**
Our contributors voted for their top ten archival records, CDs, downloads and streams, and we counted them all up

6 **Masthead**

8 **Letters**

107 **Out There**
Festivals, concerts, gigs and club listings

112 **Subscribe**
Print, digital, downloads and CDs

Cover: 2022 Rewind by Leon Chew

Give the gift of *The Wire*

Let a music lover know that you care – give them a subscription to *The Wire*.

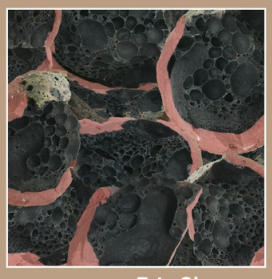
When you give someone a one year gift subscription to *The Wire* they receive:

– The next 12 monthly issues of the print magazine
– The next 12 monthly issues of the digital edition of the magazine
– 1 year's free access to the complete online library of back issues
– The next 3 volumes of *The Wire Tapper* on CD and as downloads
– The next 4 volumes of *Below The Radar* as downloads
– 1 year's free access to the online archive of audio downloads

We can send the recipient notification of their gift subscription with a special *Wire* greetings card featuring the front and back covers of the first issue of the magazine. You can also ask us to include a message of your choice on the inside of the card.

To give the gift of *The Wire* go to thewire.co.uk/subscribe, email subs@thewire.co.uk, or call +44 (0)20 7422 5022.

6 monthly and 2 year gift subscriptions are also available.



Eric Chenaux
Say Laura

Kee Avil
Crease

Black Ox Orkestar
Everything Returns

Jessica Moss
Galaxy Heart

Automatisme & Stefan Paulus
Gap / Void

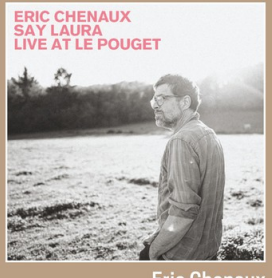
T. Gowdy
Miracles

Steve Bates
All The Things That Happen

Esmerine
Everything Was Forever Until It Was No More

JOYFULTALK
Familiar Science

V/A
Corona Borealis
Longform Singles Series



Eric Chenaux
Say Laura Live At Le Pouget

Godspeed You Black Emperor!
All Lights Fucked On The Hairy Amp Drooling

Digital Subscription: Get all our 2022 releases above, including subscriber exclusives *Eric Chenaux Live At Le Pouget* and *All Lights Fucked On The Hairy Amp Drooling*, plus *Corona Borealis* (16 longform tracks by 16 artists), everything we release in 2023, and 25% off all LP/CD orders across our 25-year catalogue of over 150 full-length albums. Sustaining beyond words for us. 20+ albums for you at $65 USD. Until 31 Dec 2022. **constellation.bandcamp.com/subscribe**

CONSTELLATION
1997–2022
cstrecords.com

The Masthead

My most powerful moment in music this year was silence. At the end of a much anticipated performance by AMM, reduced to a duo this warm evening at London's Cafe Oto because of John Tilbury's health issues, Eddie Prévost quietly checked his array of percussion implements and Keith Rowe sat poised motionless over his table of electronics, as if both were keeping themselves ready for something still to happen. But everything had already been said in a hushed and emotional performance, and eventually the sometime antagonists exchanged a laugh to acknowledge this could have been their last dance together. The moment showed how music can put the trials of life to one side, and how community makes performers more than the sum of their parts.

Another moment required me to stay mute. As part of *The Wire*'s 40th birthday celebrations at the same venue, an evening titled The Tao Of AMM × The Essence Of SME saw an octet of improvisors exploring the aesthetics and praxes of those two groups. Thurston Moore created chiming backdrops from an electric guitar on his lap, Mandhira de Saram generated friction on the cello string, Steve Beresford interjected tricky questions from the piano. 19 July was the hottest day ever recorded in the UK, but this was the only gig I could make that week, so I sat sweltering behind a N95 respirator mask for the whole three hour performance. The gig was a reminder post-Covid that committing yourself totally to a performance, being present and in the moment, can yield brief moments of enlightenment.

In our end of year issue we hear from our critics, and many of them meditate on the return of live music and their own conflicted feelings about gathering together after the pandemic. "Covid-19 transformed former safe spaces into 'what if' spaces," reflects Miloš Hroch. "At the back of my mind was a hunch that someone in the room might have 'it'." Dave Mandl discusses how, in a context where tours were often imperilled by illness or lack of crew, "no one could be certain that any show would actually happen till it happened".

Many things remain unsaid about the Covid crisis and its ripple effects on music culture. Often left out of the discussion are music fans with longterm health conditions, who must now weigh up seriously whether it's worth risking their wellbeing by attending a live performance. For some, the unpredictability and impulsiveness that makes live music so vital is no longer something that can be sensibly accommodated into their lives.

There are other quiet murmurs of discontent with live music. Sometimes gigs sell a healthy amount of tickets only for punters to decide to not turn up, for reasons of caution, boredom, or they are out of the live music habit. If you look beyond gigs by established artists which sell out in minutes, those for artists in mid-career receive a more mixed level of interest. It creates a live music scene where the familiar is rewarded and the unfamiliar is given less chance to thrive and evolve.

The Wire will always be a place for those who need to be listened to, or are at risk of not being heard. After a tumultuous and brutal year across many parts of Europe and Asia, our end of year issue also includes reports from Siavash Amini in Iran and Maya Baklanova in Ukraine on how music culture in those countries is enduring and creating even when it is sometimes literally being driven underground. Indeed, Maya Baklanova filed her copy amid blackouts, internet outages and the many trials of living life in a city that is being bombed and whose civilian population are routinely targeted and brutalised by Russia. Their voices need to be listened to, now more than ever.

Derek Walmsley

Distribution

News stands

UK, Europe & Rest of World (excl USA)
Seymour Distribution
Tel +44 (0)20 7429 4000
UK vicky.waterland@seymour.co.uk
Export louise.mcallister@seymour.co.uk

USA
ANC
Tel 1 866 466 7231
cservice@anclink.com

Bookshops

Worldwide
Central Books
Tel +44 (0)20 8986 4854
sasha@centralbooks.com

Independent record shops

UK
Shellshock
Tel +44 (0)1603 626221
neil@shellshock.co.uk

Europe
state51
Tel +44 (0)20 7729 4343
shaun@state51.com

USA
Forced Exposure
Fax 781 321 0321
AVisser@forcedexposure.com

Rest of World
Contact *The Wire* direct
Tel +44 (0)20 7422 5022
Fax +44 (0)20 7422 5011
distribution@thewire.co.uk

Subscriptions

Print Subscription

12 issues
UK £56
Europe £80
Rest of World (Air) £94

Digital Subscription

12 months
Worldwide £36

See page 112 for details, or go to thewire.co.uk/subscribe

The Wire is published 12 times a year by *The Wire* Magazine Ltd. Printed in the UK by Walstead Bicester.

The Wire was founded in 1982 by Anthony Wood. Between 1984–2000 it was part of Naim Attallah's Namara Group. In December 2000 it was purchased in a workers' buy-out by the magazine's then current staff. It continues to publish as a 100 per cent independent operation.

The views expressed in *The Wire* are those of the respective contributors and are not necessarily shared by the magazine or its staff. *The Wire* assumes no responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts, photographs, illustrations or promotional items. Copyright in the UK and abroad is held by the publisher or by freelance contributors. Unauthorised reproduction of any item is forbidden.

Issue 467 January 2023
£5.95 ISSN 0952-0686

The Wire
William Pitt Room, New Wing, Somerset House, London WC2R 1LA, UK
Tel +44 (0)20 7422 5010
fax +44 (0)20 7422 5011
thewire.co.uk
@thewiremagazine
Subscriptions subs@thewire.co.uk
Events listings listings@thewire.co.uk

Publisher Tony Herrington tony@thewire.co.uk
Editor-in-Chief Chris Bohn chris@thewire.co.uk

Editor Derek Walmsley derek@thewire.co.uk
Deputy Editors
Emily Bick emily@thewire.co.uk
Joseph Stannard joe@thewire.co.uk

Advertising & Licensing Manager
Shane Woolman shane@thewire.co.uk
Advertising Sales
James Gormley james@thewire.co.uk

Online Editor
Meg Woof meg@thewire.co.uk

Listings & Newsletter Editor
Phil England phil@thewire.co.uk

Subscriptions & online shop
Misha Farrant subs@thewire.co.uk

Art Direction
Guillaume Chuard guillaume@thewire.co.uk
Design
Gareth Lindsay gareth@thewire.co.uk
Sean Charlton White
Photo Editor
Amy Gwatkin amy@thewire.co.uk

Subscriptions & Systems Consultant
Ben House ben@thewire.co.uk
Online Development
Dorian Fraser Moore dorian@thewire.co.uk

Archivist Edwin Pouncey edwin@thewire.co.uk

Contributing Editors
Anne Hilde Neset, Rob Young

Thanks this issue Abi Bliss, Louis Pattison

Words
Yewande Adeniran, Vanessa Ague, Jennifer Lucy Allan, Steve Barker, Mike Barnes, Dan Barrow, Robert Barry, Tristan Bath, Clive Bell, Claire Biddles, Abi Bliss, Gabriel Bristow, Britt Brown, Madeleine Byrne, Helena Celle, Philip Clark, Byron Coley, Lara C Cory, Julian Cowley, Raymond Cummings, Laina Dawes, Josh Feola, Phil Freeman, Noel Gardner, Michael A Gonzales, Francis Gooding, Kurt Gottschalk, Louise Gray, George Grella, James Hadfield, Andy Hamilton, Adam Harper, Jim Haynes, Ken Hollings, Miloš Hroch, Jo Hutton, Leah Kardos, Kek-W, Joshua Minsoo Kim, Biba Kopf, Matt Krefting, Steph Kretowicz, Neil Kulkarni, Chloe Lula, Dave Mandl, Howard Mandel, Peter Margasak, Marc Masters, Ryan Meehan, Noel Meek, Bill Meyer, Frances Morgan, John Morrison, Brian Morton, Joe Muggs, Deborah Nash, Daniel Neofetou, Louis Pattison, Hannah Pezzack, Stephanie Phillips, Antonio Poscic, Emily Pothast, Edwin Pouncey, Chal Ravens, Mosi Reeves, Tony Rettman, Simon Reynolds, Mariam Rezaei, Ilia Rogatchevski, Bruce Russell, Sukhdev Sandhu, Claire Sawers, Dave Segal, Stewart Smith, Rosie Esther Solomon, Daniel Spicer, Richard Stacey, Richard Thomas, Dave Tompkins, Spenser Tomson, David Toop, Rob Turner, Zakia Uddin, Gabriel Jermaine Vanlandingham-Dunn, Val Wilmer

Images
Apela Bell, Madeline Cass, Symrin Chalwa, Leon Chew, Aldona Dye, Diana Pfammatter, Eric Scaggiante

nonesuch

AVAILABLE NOW ON NONESUCH RECORDS

JOHN ADAMS
Collected Works

'Adams is a composer who can lead people by the hand towards music that sings their language. I'd strongly advise you invest in *Collected Works* without delay.'

– Gramophone

A FAR CRY & SHARA NOVA
The Blue Hour

By Rachel Grimes, Angélica Negrón, Shara Nova, Caroline Shaw & Sarah Kirkland Snider

'A subtle reflection of dehumanisation, examined through alphabetically arranged phrases woven into 40 movements, each created by individual composers. A Far Cry hands the ever-changing moods with poise, creating a sense of otherworldliness.'

– BBC Music Magazine

TYONDAI BRAXTON
Telekinesis

'A symphonic work that sounds like a lost sci-fi film soundtrack. It has the clustered, hovering awe of Ligeti's *Atmosphères* and the eerie arpeggiated angles of Hermann soundtracks like *Vertigo* and *The Day The Earth Stood Still*. It's a hoot.'

– The Wire

MARY HALVORSON
Amaryllis & Belladonna

'A new label and a flowering of new material from the ever-fecund Halvorson. Each album stands alone yet it's impossible not to compare and contrast how they complement yet challenge each other. The release of either of these albums would be significant, but to have them released simultaneously is a major musical event.'

– Jazzwise, Albums of the Year

TIGRAN HAMASYAN
StandArt

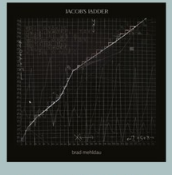
'Hamasyan continues to break new ground with his outside-the-box interpretations of Broadway-to-bebop standards. Testament to the 20th century American jazz songbook's timelessness that contemporary musicians can still see it as the ultimate challenge. Only the very few are able to make it sound fresh and new today.'

– Jazzwise, Albums of the Year

TAJ MAHAL & RY COODER
Get on Board

'Now 79 and 74 respectively, Mahal and Cooder are giving back here like so often before. As they revive and curate earthy, animated songs by Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee, there is clearly love in the room.'

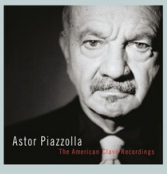
– Mojo, Albums of the Year



BRAD MEHLDAU
Jacob's Ladder

'Relish a unique contemporary musician's ingenious mingling of a traditional and contemporary sound palette, with plenty of characteristically freewheeling jazz detours on the way.'

– Guardian, Jazz Album of the Month



ASTOR PIAZZOLLA
The American Clavé Recordings

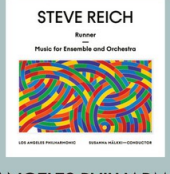
'Together, the albums constitute a landmark not only in tango but also in modern music. A must-have audible tryptic of Piazzolla at his zenith.'

– Songlines

ENSEMBLE INTERCONTEMPORAIN & GEORGE JACKSON
Steve Reich: Reich/Richter

'Few artists maintain quality into advanced old age, but Reich's mastery seems undimmed.'

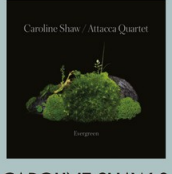
– The Wire



LOS ANGELES PHILHARMONIC & SUSANNA MÄLKKI
Steve Reich: Runner / Music for Ensemble and Orchestra

'Two works exploring the building blocks of rhythm and theme. An inquisitive set of motifs and seismic transitions. Both unsettling and enlivening.'

– Uncut



CAROLINE SHAW & ATTACCA QUARTET
Evergreen

'Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Caroline Shaw continues to make waves with her imaginative and expressive works that glide effortlessly between genres.'

– BBC Music Magazine

WILCO
Yankee Hotel Foxtrot
(Super Deluxe Edition)

'America's greatest band. The album has always been a Wilco landmark. This new monolithic reissue restates the case that it's still their most crucial record, opening the way to everything they've done since. A cast-iron rock classic.'

– Uncut, Reissues of the Year

NONESUCH.COM

Letters

Robert Rich

Lustmord

Darkness visible

How about a Primer on dark ambient music (pretty please)? Yes, dark ambient is a pretty big area which spreads its Lovecraftian tentacles far and wide, and is probably not always easy to define, or at least to limit, but I'm sure your Primer writers would do as excellent job as ever with this.

I guess some of the bigger players in the game would be the likes of Atrium Carceri, Kammarheit, Northaunt, Raison D'etre, Controlled Bleeding, Lustmord, Coph Nia, Robert Rich… But a basic online search for dark ambient artists tends to produce the names of any musicians whose work is in some way ominous, gloomy, drone-inflected and/or blackly atmospheric (such as later Nurse With Wound, :zoviet*france:, Muslimgauze, Tangerine Dream, Throbbing Gristle, etc; all of whom could be said to be early influencers of the genre rather than typical of it).

There are two major labels that deal pretty much exclusively with dark ambient music: Cryo Chamber and Cyclic Law, and a quick browse around their websites gives an indication of some of the aesthetics of dark ambient: post-apocalyptic landscapes; gothic images of cold, cavernous, forbidding ruins; a tendency by artists to name themselves with Latin (or at least Latin-sounding) and other European names; demonic entities and beings; and and a general, unspecified sense of malevolent forces lying hidden to unleash themselves.

I think a lot of this music – at least originally – was created for use in computer games (although I know nothing about computer games), and that often shows, in a good way. Anyway, it would be really great if someone at *The Wire* could do this but I understand that it might just be too big an area for it to be possible.

I adore your magazine, and since I started subscribing to it about ten years ago it has totally opened up my musical universe.

Paul Martin Portsmouth, UK

Biographical sketch

After years of subscribing to the magazine I'm getting to recognise the names of some of your contributors, but whether or not I do, I know nothing about them. Might you add brief bios for authors of features a page or longer? Just a sentence would help, such as this about the author of a recent *Times Literary Supplement* review: "Kathryn Hughes is Professor Emerita of Life Writing at the University of East Anglia. She is currently finishing a book about late-Victorian cats." That's the sort of attention-grabber *The Wire* could do with great style. Often I'd like to read more of what your contributors have written.

William Denton via email

Format error

As a long time collector of music I was pleased to see the resurgent interest in vinyl and its stimulation of the music market. However, over the past couple of years I've wondered if in fact this is actually a good thing for music fans. I am gradually coming to the opinion that it is more about format fetishisation than sonic quality and that stifles access.

I have quite a catholic taste and find that across all genres that interest me, many of the labels and musicians I like are trying to get me to part with ever-increasing sums of money, often selling wonderful music only on vinyl and getting very exercised about the small number of discs available, the colour of the vinyl, the type of cardboard used, etc. Very often an LP is double the price of its equivalent CD and I wonder why that might be.

Another area I find difficult to understand is music made exclusively, or at least predominantly, digitally then only available on analogue LP.

Unless one has the good fortune to have a very good home hi-fi and a room in which to dedicate to sound, playback quality is, in my opinion, not particularly different between CD and LP. I believe that the music is far more important than the formats.

I would be very interested in the opinions of music consumers, makers, producers, writers and business people. It would be interesting to hear from all sides of this argument and I hope you can facilitate the debate.

Russell Ackermann-Callow via email

We welcome letters commenting on all aspects of *The Wire* and the music it covers. Write to us at letters@thewire.co.uk. Letters may be edited.

Kati-Astrear (Rich); Piotr Mleko Mlkowski (Lustmord)

Free subscriber download:
Below The Radar 41

To coincide with the publication of this issue of *The Wire*, all the magazine's subscribers can download the next album in its ongoing series of underground music compilations, *Below The Radar*.

Below The Radar 41 features tracks by Ailbhe Nic Oireachtaigh, Nika Son, Chloe Kim, Ailie Ormston & Tim Fraser, Julia Sabra & Fadi Tabbal, Bella, Kilynn Lunsford, Zaliva-D, Hassan Abou Alam, Daniel Bachman, Prangers and more.

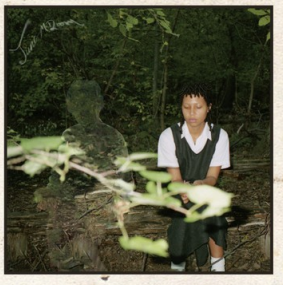
Subscribers can download every album in the *Below The Radar* series here: thewire.co.uk/audio/btr.

For details of how to subscribe to *The Wire*, see page 112 or go to: thewire.co.uk/subscribe.

TEMPORARY RESIDENCE LTD.

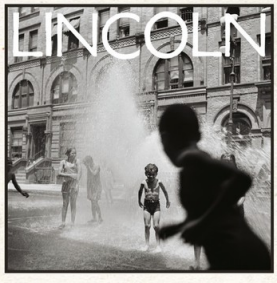
NINA NASTASIA
Riderless Horse
The renowned singer-songwriter emerges from a 12-year hiatus with her first-ever proper solo album. Produced by **Steve Albini**.

ELUVIUM
(Whirring Marvels In) Consensus Reality
A bold, career-defining turn for the renowned composer that explores our compicated relationships with technology, automations, and algorithms

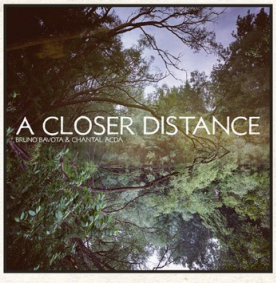


JUNE McDOOM
June McDoom
The debut EP by the emerging Jamaican-American singer-songwriter carves a unique new space in folk music.

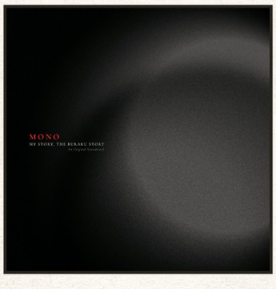
PARTY DOZEN
The Real Work
The undefinable sax & drums duo from Australia deliver their fiercest and most diverse album yet. Features guest vocals by **Nick Cave**.



LINCOLN
Repair and Reward
The entire recorded history of one of the foundational pieces of early 1990s post-hardcore is restored and remastered after being unavailable for over 25 years.

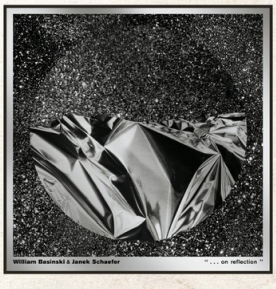


BRUNO BAVOTA & CHANTAL ACDA
A Closer Distance
The Italian composer collaborates with the acclaimed Dutch singer-songwriter on this magical collection of intricate and intimate works.



MONO *My Story, The Buraku Story*
The legendary Japanese instrumental rock band releases their first-ever film soundtrack. A masterwork of delicate, understated execution with oversized emotional resonance.

EXPLOSIONS IN THE SKY
Big Bend (An Original Soundtrack for Public Television)
Explosions In The Sky's first release in 5 years is a euphoric soundtrack for this PBS Nature documentary.

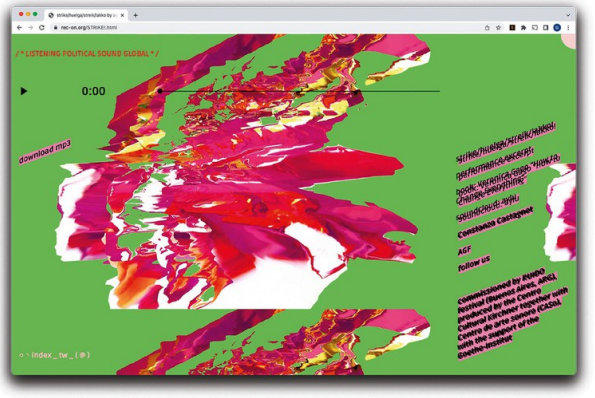


WILLIAM BASINSKI & JANEK SCHAEFER
" . . . on reflection "
Nearly a decade in the making, this collaborative album is a diamond of meditative wonder.

TEMPORARY RESIDENCE LTD. NYC • USA SHOP • **TEMPORARYRESIDENCE.COM**

Unlimited Editions

AGF's multimedia online sound archive **REC-on** brings oral histories from around the globe into the digital sphere. By **Stephanie Phillips**



Webpage for AYLY & AGF featuring Constanza Castagnet's *Strike* (2021)

With each new development in technology there is a sigh of resignation from many cynics that this new phase will further tear apart our already disconnected and fragmented society. There's no denying that the desire of many social media overlords seems to be to make money and keep us tearing at each other's throats, but some still believe in the communal power of the internet.

Poet, musician and new media artist Antye Greie-Ripatti (aka AGF/poemproducer) is one such person. Raised in East Germany and based in Finland, AGF has created a space for connection and intellectual expansion through the website REC-on, an online archive for political sound work that showcases collaborations with artists and activists from around the world.

On REC-on's ever-growing website, featuring lurid, neon-coloured backgrounds overlaid with moving graphics, users can listen to London born, Philadelphia based DJ and producer BEARCAT's moving piece dedicated to Sandra Bland, who died in police custody in 2015. Click through to another page and a piece by sound artist Sukitoa o Namau on animal rights may catch your attention; then go to listen to the auDefenze sound collection on land acknowledgement or an interview with author Sunaina Arya about Dalit feminist theory. By merging spoken word, truncated news clips and found sounds to produce a tapestry of interconnected sonic landscapes, REC-on acts as a sound bank for oral histories, made for our hyper online world.

The project started in 2020 when, after spending 30 years writing and releasing experimental music, AGF was looking for a new way to present her work. "I was thinking about the internet, the meaning of vibration and frequency, and what I can contribute to this," she explains. Using funding from Kone Foundation, a non-profit organisation based in Finland, she built a hub for artists and political viewpoints that, AGF believes, deserve to be heard outside of their local community. "I wanted to go a little bit deeper to say something that's not usually set to music because it sounds corny or there are no words yet," she says. "These artists are not known. They're not on record, they're not on magazine covers, or even festival stages, but they're doing this amazing stuff. I want more people to listen to their work, I want more respect for their genre, because there's so much respect for sometimes the most silly stuff."

Working with activists from around the world has its challenges, and despite REC-on being a multimedia platform, many pieces took years to arrange because the contributing artists lived in places with limited internet access. AGF is also aware that activists creating pieces exposing corrupt governments or nefarious organisations can put themselves at risk by taking part in the project. "I was working with this Kurdish-Iranian person on the land acknowledgement piece. That person is every day right now in danger to be shot or taken to prison. It's scary as fuck."

For AGF, being in contact with so many activists and artists has been an exercise of self-study. "If I want to facilitate the work of an indigenous African woman, I have to learn everything, so I read and read and read, and every time I finish a project, I learn so much. I'm just trying to be humble, learn, and use my production skills to make it sound as good as possible."

This being an online project, where information is only as secure as a hosting server allows it to be, the longevity of REC-on is always up for debate. AGF is looking for further funding to keep the website going. "Right now, I'm thinking about making cards or postcards because some pages look quite beautiful and it will work visually. Also, so I have something to give to people who don't know about it."

In the future, REC-on might evolve into a physical visual arts medium, a travelling festival, or something completely different. Regardless, AGF hopes that participating in REC-on has as much impact on the artists she has collaborated with as its online listeners and viewers. "I want people to be courageous to tell the truth and also be creative with it," she concludes. "I'm hoping to give space to other artists to just do what they want." ☐ rec-on.org

Unofficial Channels
Xenwiki

In 2014 I crowdsourced tunings. I encouraged users of an app to focus upon a thought and select frequencies they felt corresponded to that thought. Unsophisticated? Maybe. But I tried to legitimise the process by excavating little-known 1940s psychical oscillator experiments, and politicised it by linking it to decolonisation and non-binary identity.

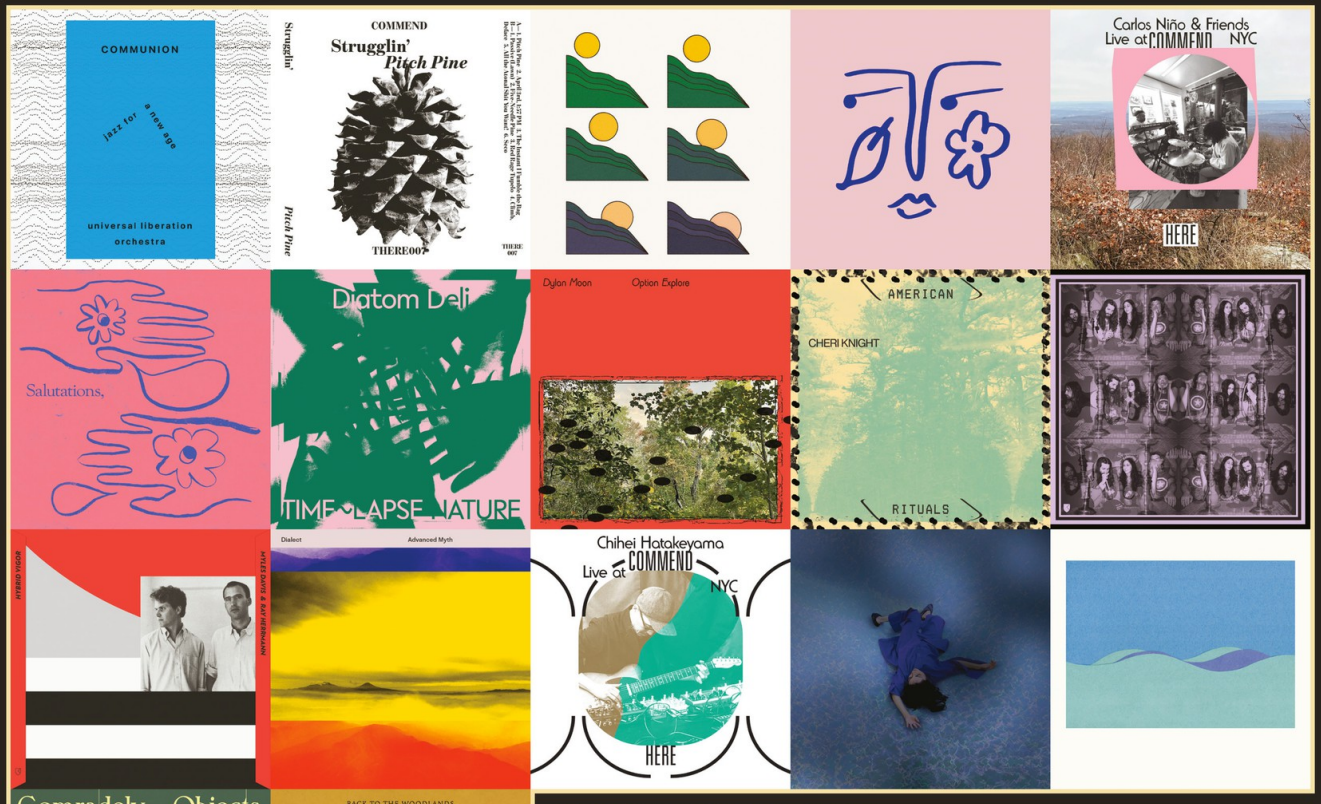
These statements attracted some flak on internet forums dedicated to microtonality from purists who disparaged the whiff of mysticism. Few areas of music are as rife with disagreement as the microtonal community, and this wrangling adds an energetic backdrop to the compelling world of alternative tuning systems. It's played out on platforms such as the Xenharmonic Alliance Facebook and (fittingly named) Discord pages, populated by users at various stages of becoming "seduced into musical carpentry" (to quote Harry Partch).

Back in 1966, the musician Ivor Darreg self-published the first of many *Xenharmonic Bulletins* – stapled mimeographed sheets – agitating "why not start from scratch with the wonderful facilities now at hand, and produce truly new, 20th century instruments?" His term xenharmonic is an example of the splintering habit: an alternative to microtonal, it introduces the Greek prefix for strange or foreign, evoking xenharmonicists' ever-exoticising adventures.

Darreg didn't live to see the evolution of the World Wide Web – a retro term we should often redeploy to remind ourselves of its breadth – a space across which the Wiki model has become an egalitarian vehicle for the same ideals as the *Xenharmonic Bulletins*. The Xenharmonic Wiki, a resource which began in 2005, distils the principal discussions into a comprehensive knowledge base. Set up by Jacob Barton, it proposed numerous avenues for collective research, including "why do microtonal musicians argue so much?" Yet the Xenwiki community has proven solid, guiding it through many upheavals, obtaining free educational status in 2012 when fees imperilled it.

This extraordinary organically growing resource shares some contributors with the older Tonalsoft Encyclopedia, but adds crucial interactivity. Navigation reveals tantalising temperaments: Garibaldi, Cotoneum, Newt, Injera, Sqrtphi, Wizard. Yet there's been at least one volte face where a temperamental temperamentalist erased all mention of their work. Such frissons make it ripe for an essayist on cultural tectonics to do for the Xenwiki what Georgina Born did for IRCAM in her *Rationalizing Culture*. ☐ en.xen.wiki

Dan Wilson



UNIVERSAL LIBERATION ORCHESTRA
Communion

STRUGGLIN'
Pitch Pine

FLORE LAURENTIENNE
Volume I

ISIK KURAL
in february

CARLOS NIÑO & FRIENDS
Live at Commend, NYC

V/A
Salutations

DIATOM DELI
Time~Lapse Nature

DYLAN MOON
Option Explore

CHERI KNIGHT
American Rituals

PSYCHIC ILLS & GIBBY HAYNES
FRKWYS Vol. 4.5: Nowhere in the Night

MYLES DAVIS & RAY HERRMANN
Hybrid Vigor

DIALECT
Advanced Myth

CHIHEI HATAKEYAMA
Live at Commend

LUCRECIA DALT
¡Ay!

FLORE LAURENTIENNE
Volume II

HORSE LORDS
Comradely Objects

ERNEST HOOD
Back to the Woodlands

RVNG Freedom To Spend Commend

2022

steady flow,
steady glow

rvng.com
freedomtospend.org

$FTS

What if some magic keys in the past, hidden in the occult sciences or old philosophies, could open the doors to a better future? That horizon of possibility fascinates Milan based producer Daniele Guerrini who, as Heith, explores the what if question on his album *X, wheel*. Here his music is forged out of disparate soundworlds. A first listen makes you feel like you are encountering three different records as it sways between deconstructed club tropes, doom heaviness and cyber noir. "I was reading Italian philosopher Federico Campagna, and his book *Technic And Magic* influenced me a lot in the composition of the album," reflects Guerrini, while having a morning smoke outside of his Milan studio. Campagna writes that we can hack our "reality-setting" and imagination through magical thinking – his alternative to oppressive technological rationality. "His idea of world-building is close to my approach to music," declares Guerrini. "Some old ways can open new meanings to our situation."

Guerrini escaped from Milan to the Apennine mountains to finish the album in 2020. "For a year, I was living in the countryside, and I reconnected to folklore and nature. Those mountains are full of folk legends about gnomes and fairy tales."

He collaborated on visuals for his live show with the Berlin based studio Declino, founded by architect Andrea Belosi and video game designer GVN908. Their performance at the congress centre ICE Kraków during this year's Unsound festival was immersive, as if Heith and his collaborators were composing a live soundtrack to a chariot-racing game. Like Heith's *X, wheel* album, it took you on a frenzied ride through dark woods and deserted post-apocalyptic landscapes, somewhere between the gothic horror of Francis Ford Coppola's 1992 *Dracula* and the dystopic fiction of *Total Recall*. "It's like a dark holiday on a chariot," says Guerrini. "Many discourses about apocalypse are reactionary and nihilistic, I don't have anything to do with that, but after every apocalypse comes something new."

Perhaps surprisingly, considering his zeal for theoretical concepts and world-building, *X, wheel* was composed on guitar. "I started with music as a guitarist when I was a kid," he says. "That was interesting to return to it and see how you can transpose guitar harmonies to digital sounds." Digital textures on several album tracks writhe around serenade-like or rasgueado acoustic guitar played by Leonardo Rubboli. Another bandmate, drummer Jacopo Battaglia from the Roman avant jazz outfit ZU, provides heavy prog percussion, especially on the track "The Hermit". "First, I hired him as a session drummer but playing live together was an inspiration to make music together – it came naturally to compose new music together."

Guerrini grew up in the Northern Italy town of Forli listening to metal and hardcore punk. Hometown Italian screamo bands like Raein or La Quiete were a huge inspiration for his teenage self. "It was how I learnt what it means to be part of the scene and organise DIY concerts," he says, recalling how in his late teens he discovered the esoteric underground of Throbbing Gristle and Current 93, in which his interest in the occult took root. When he was 18 he moved to Milan to study philosophy and sociology. "Small towns in Italy are super nice because of the history, but people are very bounded to the past, and you can feel the oppression of the province," he sighs. "These were not happy times for teenagers."

Though Milan is a city of contrasts where cathedrals of capitalism stand in the shadow of gothic cathedrals, nowadays it's "hard to find a space for underground experimental music". The former squat turned community centre Macao, where Guerrini began to curate shows in 2013, closed down in the pandemic. In the same year, he co-founded Haunter Records with Francesco Birsa Alessandri: "In the beginning, we were very local and DIY. The idea was to promote marginalised people and genres."

As Heith, he released his first tape in 2013. If you dive into the back catalogue, you can explore the timeline of his style, from drone noise through turbulent Arca-like compositions to electroacoustic experiments. In addition his and Alessandri's Haunter label has released albums of other projects like VISIO (aka Italian artist Nicola Tirabasso), Copenhagen based saxophonist Aase Nielsen, and Lutto Lento (a project of Polish producer Lubomir Grzelak).

Techno mysticism/technopaganism constitutes one aesthetic seam running through Haunter releases. "After Catholicism took over, especially in the Mediterranean, pagans were an anti-systemic force. Today we would call them anticapitalist, as capitalism is the religion of our times," declares Guerrini. He is also inspired by Erik Davis's 1995 overview of technopaganism for *Wired* magazine, with its call for the astral plane to be reborn in cyberspace. "Technopagans suspect that these occult Old Ways can provide some handy tools and tactics in our dizzying digital environments," wrote Davis. Yet Guerrini is aware of and absolutely rejects the more sinister factions who have embraced pagan or occult cultures: "I am definitely far away from the right wing vision of spiritual enhancement for channelling supremacy!"

Heith has several shows lined up in the near future, including Donaufestival in Austria, and is looking forward to playing with *X, wheel*'s collaborators in different cities. "It has never been a project about myself, and I've always collaborated with other people," he concludes. "I think about Heith as the creation of the entity rather than a persona." □

Heith's *X, wheel* is released by Pan

The True Wheel

Milan based producer Daniele Guerrini aka **Heith** races toward a technopagan apocalypse. By **Miloš Hroch**. Photography by **Eric Scaggiante**

Seppe Gebruers 'Playing with standards'
And with two pianos tuned a quartertone apart

"When I play with my cat, how do I know that she is not playing with me rather than I with her?" (Michel de Montaigne)

Underlying any artistic endeavour is an urge to interact – with an audience, with art history, with instruments and matter, one's surroundings, other artists, oneself. This interaction, however, is not one among equal players: one person – the artist – is usually held responsible for the act. The composer composes a composition, the improviser improvises an improvisation, the performer performs a performance. These concepts suggest that the 'interaction' is one-directional. This is why I call my work 'playing with …'. For me, this expresses the multi-directionality of art. The cat also plays with me.

Although the title of my album is 'Playing with standards', the number and kinds of 'playmates' are infinite. They can be both conscious and unconscious. Most conspicuously, I play with two pianos, tuned a quartertone apart. When I play with my pianos, my pianos also play with me. The sound is not only produced and controlled by me, I am also guided by the resonance of the strings. Moreover, tuning the pianos a quartertone apart, I play with our collective artificial habit: the equal temperament. Since J.S. Bach's *Das wohltemporierte Klavier*, the custom in Europe is to have twelve equal semitones in one octave; a uniform system of tuning that still dominates Western music. Adding quartertones, one octave is divided into twenty-four equal intervals, multiplying the harmonic possibilities. Thus, our playmate – tonality – who had become a self-evident tool, is brought to the fore. I do this both to question the tradition and out of love for it.

I also play with another convention: standards. The word speaks for itself. In the history and tradition of jazz, a number of popular songs became part of a collective language which facilitated playing together in a spontaneous way. This carried within itself the risk of stifling creativity by dressing up musicians in a stylistic costume. At the same time, relieved of the responsibility of deciding which clothes to wear, the musician is free to focus on other aspects of playing – this is the paradox of freedom. Standards are imprinted on our collective (un)consciousness – even if you do not know a particular song, its nature is such that it sounds recognizable. The familiarity of the songs allows a greater level of abstraction than when creating or composing from the unknown, when the known has yet to be established.

Typically, the musician plays *on* the harmonic and melodic structure of the standard, for example in the so-called solos. This in itself has become another habit which obfuscates the great variety of playmates.
One of the things I aim for in this project is to deconstruct the harmony and melody itself, with more floating voice leadings, meandering paths on which the listener can drift along and eventually lose all sense of direction.

Sometimes, I only play with the leftovers in my memory. By striving to remember those fading fragments, another creative space opens: the standards are transformed, not intentionally but out of necessity. We tend to forget the importance of forgetting. What we remember and what we forget are signposts of what we value. I found comfort in this organic, more intuitive way of expressing my aesthetics. I look at standards as archetypal figures which spring up in memories or dreams, sometimes blurry, sometimes clear and shocking.

In its foggy shape, the identity of the original loses significance, and with it, the author does too. Isn't it this doctrine of Original and Author that has overshadowed the role of the listener in the existence of a piece? When we listen to music, we also compose: selecting the sounds based on the capacity of the ear, their familiarity and our receptibility, and shaping them into wholes, we are actively involved in the creative process. Like the ouroboros – the snake that eats its own tail – this process of listening and creating is an unending cycle, perpetually in motion. The concepts of beginning and end become hollow.
When we create, we do not create out of nothing: any idea is at least a representation of a memory or impression. Even if it feels like a fresh start, this is only because what occasioned it got lost somewhere in the depths of the mind. Beginnings, endings, results, occasions, moments – all are copies without original. Simulacra! They repeat but they are not the same. We must beware of confusing repetition with resemblance. A recording on repeat is different every time, changing with the listener's mood, the memory of the previous listening experience, the atmosphere …
'Playing with standards', the standards are repeated. It is precisely by repeating that I hope to stress the variation that is always part of repetition. Opposed to this stand the comforts of sameness, on which, for example, the artist's 'image' is based, a style that is preferably reproduced as much as possible. Creatures of habit that we are, we look for similarity and recognizability. We need a name, an individual who can be held responsible for the creation in question. There is a tendency to look for a subject, and thus we overlook the interactive whole that surrounds it, always transforming and in motion.
In my project, change, unpredictability, uncertainty, fluctuation become values. Author and work lose their individuality. The whole exceeds the subject. When playing, there is only interaction, no cat nor I.

Seppe Gebruers with Hannah Lingier

A collaboration of Troika vzw, el NEGOCITO Records and KASK Ghent

<3 el NEGOCITO Records KASK CONSERVATO CONSERVA RIUM CONSER TORIUM CON VATORIUM SERVATORIUM HO GENT howest

www.playingwithstandards.com
www.elnegocitorecords.com

Venus Rising

Producer and researcher Nontokozo F Sihwa aka **Venus Ex Machina** writes music for new cybernetic mythologies. By **Meg Woof**. Photography by **Symrin Chalwa**

"People often think that I'm the 'Venus' and I'm coming from the machine, but actually, the term deus ex machina is where I got the name," explains artist and researcher Nontokozo F Sihwa, who uses her Venus Ex Machina alias as a vehicle for instrument and circuit building, audio programming, workshop leading, performing and composing.

"Deus ex machina – it's a resolution to a plot that has all of these threads," she continues. "The reason is often something completely absurd, but it explains everything. Then instead of Deus, I added Venus, because I was also thinking about Venus as the goddess of love and beauty. I was thinking of myself putting love into my computer, and then hopefully getting beauty out."

As soon as a resolution appears, Venus Ex Machina unravels it, and the potential to make new connections is infinite. "The connection, that's the end goal, right? That's why we all make music – it's communication."

Sihwa's earliest experience of making music was composing for her choir in Zimbabwe, where she spent her adolescence before moving back to her birthplace Scotland as a teenager. The journey from then up to now and the release of her second album *Doxa* has been one of continuous questioning across diverse studies and practices. A trained mathematician and audio engineer, she has been delving deep into music theory and history from a young age. But for Sihwa, being interdisciplinary is not just about sustaining her many interests, but also her way of considering questions from many different perspectives.

When I say interdisciplinary, she tells me the word was popularised in the 1920s by students of humanities and sciences who felt subject classifications were becoming too remote from one another, and a more holistic approach was needed. "It's something that I really stand by," asserts Sihwa over Zoom from her current residence in Providence, Rhode Island, where she's undertaking a PhD in music and multimedia composition. "It's important to have spaces where you have comfort and room to grow, but it's also important to challenge yourself on your assumptions and boundaries, and to accept other ideas that are outside of your own bubble."

This kaleidoscopic approach is audible on *Doxa*, which incorporates a larger palette of sounds and tools than her 2021 debut album *Lux*. *Doxa* features experiments with aleatoric techniques, Shepard tones, no-input effects sound paths, samples and found sounds, resulting in an assembly of varied rhythms, intermittent visceral noise, distorted melodies and outlying voices. On the beatless stretched-out track "The Abyss", lush electronic oscillations are paired with ghostly wind instruments seeping through radio static; the high tech nomad glide of "Galaxy Crimewave" recalls the electro ballads of Drexciya or Legowelt; and the intense folding and unfurling beat of "Katak" has a hard and resolute edge, perhaps influenced by Sihwa's formative years participating in Northern England's free party scene. "When I am creating sounds I look for crunchiness, feedback or something that makes my ear tingle," she says, citing Throbbing Gristle as an influence. "Most recently, I have been exploring darkness in timbre."

Thematically, the album continues Sihwa's explorations into future cybernetics and ancient mythology. Her juxtaposition of these seemingly remote topics is also a way of questioning the periodisation of time itself. These ideas intersect on "Zeus And Metis" – where the track's title, taken from an ancient Greek myth, converges with the composition's shimmering digital sounds – providing an opportunity to reflect on the way history and the future are organised and presented to us. "Who do those distinctions serve?" Sihwa asks, questioning both the structuring of epochs, and the colonial imposition of Greenwich Mean Time. "Because, as we know, this myth of progress is often used to sell us certain political ideologies: this idea that there's a linear history of progress from then until now, and then the future will be better. And that's really not what's happening … these terms that I take, I don't consider them as dogmas."

This is underlined in the album's title, *Doxa*: a common belief, rather than justified truth. "There's so much that we also know without it having been given to us through the classroom," she continues. "*Doxa*, it's really like street smarts, to me that's what it means. But it's a very contested word. And I liked that."

In addition to composing, Sihwa's sound art work considers listening practices and sound transmission. When building an effects unit called Scree, for which she created the controller circuit from scratch and programmed in C++ using the Bela platform, she added an extra dimension: "What's new or unusual about it is that I added a radio transmitter to the output circuit. Meaning that the unit can be used to broadcast a live performance on the FM spectrum, and I am keen to trial this in the near future."

The Venus Ex Machina vehicle has also led Sihwa to work in intensive collaborative projects. In 2018 at CTM HackLab in Berlin, she took part in the development and production of a "pirate AI opera", an experience she found particularly profound as she saw her own ideas "transformed through other people's minds". The same year she led a workshop at Moogfest in North Carolina, teaching attendees how to build their own radio transmitter, a DIY exercise again designed as an opportunity to reconsider a regulated system. "It was really magical," she fondly recalls. "You tuned the radio, and amidst all of the commercial radio, there was your own signal. The principle behind it was this idea that we have the spectrum of frequency, and it's so pervasive and it permeates our bodies, we walk through it, we live in it, but we're not allowed to access certain parts of it. What's that all about?

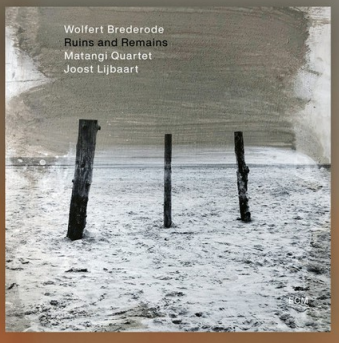
"That was kind of what I was challenging," she concludes. "I was asking people to do a thought exercise on what it feels like and what it means to claim some of that space for yourself." ☐ Venus Ex Machina's *Doxa* is released by AD 93

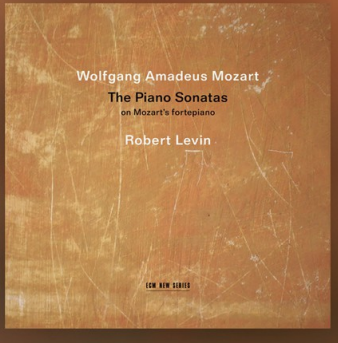
ECM

Edition of Contemporary Music

"Thanks to its insistence on clarity of expression — as well as clarity of sound — ECM has, since 1969, helped shape the way we listen to jazz and contemporary classical music."

– Giovanni Russonello,
New York Times



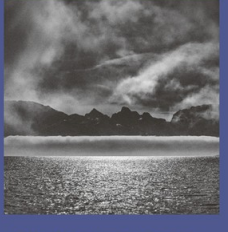


ECM NEW SERIES

PETER KNIGHT
SHADOW PHASE
(LP + DIGITAL)

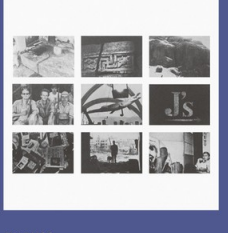
AVIVA ENDEAN
MOTHS & STARS
(CD + DIGITAL)

LAWRENCE ENGLISH
THEMES AND ATMOSPHERES FOR ADAM CURTIS'S RUSSIA 1985-1999
TRAUMAZONE (DIGITAL)

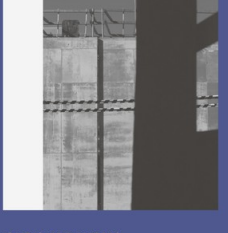


LIONEL MARCHETTI & DECIBEL
INLAND LAKE (LE LAC INTÉRIEUR)
(CD + DIGITAL)

COLIN STETSON
CHIMÆRA I
(LP + DIGITAL)



PHAUSS
AUDIODROME
(CD/BOOK + DIGITAL)



CHRIS ABRAHAMS
FOLLOWER
(LP + DIGITAL)

FRANCESCO FABRIS & BEN FROST
VAKNING
(LP + DIGITAL)

ROOM40.BANDCAMP.COM

Float On

New Zealand instrument builder and psychedelicist **Kraus** imagines healing music for deep sea dreamers. By **Kiran Dass** Photography by **Apela Bell**

"There's a great Delia Derbyshire quote where she says she makes music such that any reasonably intelligent, openminded person should be able to understand it and enjoy it. That's what I aim for," declares Pat Kraus, the Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland composer and producer of psychedelic music and sound art. Pursuing a keen interest in minimalism, analogue synths, 20th century avant garde, non-Western and early music, as well as the work of Suzanne Ciani and Jean-Michel Jarre, Kraus has forged his own singular brand of mediaeval futurism. Wonky, scrunched up guitars have graced his past releases, and his free-range sci-fi micro ragas come from a love of arcane library music and the eerily atmospheric sound design of 1960s and 70s television series like *Dr Who* and *Blake's 7*.

"My music has always been short in form, rhythmic and melodic, modal and often pentatonic," he continues. "I prefer focused, vivid, in the face sounds rather than washed-out impressionistic things. And right from the start I've valued brevity, and a way of structuring music that's not that different from how simple folk and pop music is constructed, on a fundamental level."

While at Otago University in Dunedin in 1995, Kraus bought an acoustic guitar with his student loan and taught himself to play. He joined scuzzy lo-fi Dunedin punk noise group Murdering Monsters, and in 2001 played clattering, primitive drums in freakbeat sci-fi punk outfit The Futurians. He then moved to Auckland and worked with noise rock bands The Maltese Falcons and Olympus, while continuing his solo activities. The Dunedin rock underground of the 1990s has a strong electronic legacy, and Kraus names the dazzlingly prolific Matt Middleton's Crude and the mangled surf rock of King Loser as key influences on his approach to sound.

Because he neither had the equipment nor the money, Kraus has long produced music made on homemade gear. "I've always worked that way, and I can't imagine trying to record anywhere else. Writing music and then taking it to a studio to record would be pointless and alien to me." Kraus has made his gear and resources publicly accessible by establishing the Music Electronics Library (MEL), a visionary lending library of handmade electronic musical devices in Tāmaki Makaurau's experimental music and sound art venue and community space the Audio Foundation.

In October, he released his 19th full-length album *Fire! Water! Air! Kraus!* which features a modular synth he built in 2010, along with the modern off the shelf digital gear he uses now. Kraus says it will likely be the last release for a while that uses any homemade gear. "[But] I don't think I'd be able to get the results I'm getting from commercial gear without that long learning experience," he elaborates. "You really understand a synthesizer when you've literally put every resistor and capacitor into it by hand. The difficulty with the homemade stuff is the weight and size. When I first went to Europe, I had this big ten kilogramme synth and a guitar, amp and two suitcases! I can't put myself through that again." As a consequence, he reports, he has recently been grappling with extreme fatigue and pain which have forced him to work from bed. "I've found modern electronic instruments can be perfect for this. They make music accessible for me when I'm really sick."

Kraus lives with ankylosing spondylitis, a longterm condition in which the spine and body joints become inflamed with symptoms of pain and fatigue. An invitation from Pōneke Wellington Aotearoa's artist-run sonic arts organisation Pyramid Club to compose a soundtrack specifically to be listened to in underwater listening environments and floatation tanks opened him up to the idea and the potential of creating music for healing.

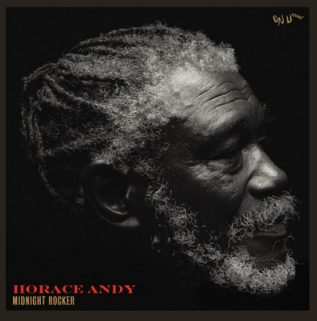
"I was interested in it because I'm a bit of a meditator and I use water to treat my chronic pain, with hot pools and aqua jogging," he explains. "Physically [floating] is quite different from what I expected. I thought I would feel floaty, like a buoyancy and that it would be a soft and wobbly sensation. But once I settle into position, it feels more like being completely fixed in place."

After testing a couple of floats for research, he knew he wanted to create accompanying music that was light and fantastical, to help ward off intrusive or dark feelings and to make the float experience joyful. "I've had a growing desire to create music that's soothing and comforting," he reiterates.

Kraus was given free rein to create whatever sonic explorations he wanted to, as long as it clocked in at the float time of an hour, and was EQ'd appropriately for the tank experience to avoid unpleasant resonances. An instrumental concept album in nine parts, his aquatic-themed *Seahorse Wedding* takes us on a watery journey. It's a musical prelude to a wedding ceremony with a crustacean celebrant, the exchange of vows and rings, to the lifting of the veil. "I also got to introduce the concept of a band playing at the wedding reception and the band are all dolphins!" he adds.

And if *Seahorse Wedding* wasn't enough, at the beginning of November, the ever active Kraus tweeted, "I released two albums last week! It's like when Guns N' Roses released *Use Your Illusion 1 & 2*, except if Axl Rose and Slash were nerds playing synthesizer in bed." He's talking about his blissful releases *Fire! Water! Air! Kraus!* on Soft Abuse and the *Chronic Illness* cassette on Artsy Records. The resulting music is quietly majestic, at once soothing and uplifting, sounding like it's beaming in from another dimension. Music, Kraus believes, is not only a powerful provider of comfort as a form of healing to those on the fringes of society, but also a way of unifying other people living with disabilities or illness.

"We all have ways of finding each other and supporting each other," he concludes, "because we need to." ☐ Kraus's *Seahorse Wedding* is released by Pyramid Club

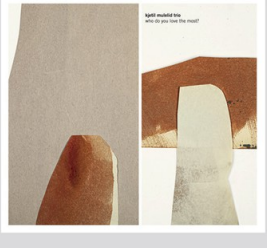


ON U sound

→ store.on-usound.com/2022

KJETIL MULELID TRIO
- new album out now and upcoming UK tour

08 feb	**Sheffield**	*Jazz at The Lescar*
10 feb	**Aberdeen**	*Blue Lamp*
11 feb	**Glasgow**	*Blue Arrow*
12 feb	**Leeds**	*Seven Arts*
13 feb	**Edinburgh**	*The Traverse Theatre*



Who Do You Love The Most?
Out now on Rune Grammofon

«*Impresses once again*» - *Jazzwise*
«*One hell of a piano trio record*» - Written In Music
«A beautiful and refreshing release» - International Piano Magazine
«It's music that is eminently accessible, but also subtly challenging» - TheJazzMan
«*A wonderful balance between a rich, playful energy, and a delicate, sensitive contemplation*» - UKvibe
«Mulelid shatters the popular misconception that all contemporary Scandinavian piano trios are trapped in a glacial echo chamber» - Jazz Journal

www.kjetilmulelid.com https://mulelid.bandcamp.com rune grammofon

Stormy Weather

Guitarist **Daniel Bachman** adapts the folk tradition of disaster songs for uncertain times and climate crisis.
By **Louis Pattison**.
Photography by **Aldona Dye**

The last couple of years have seen many musicians grappling with the climate crisis, but few records captured how it feels to live through these times – the anxiety, the uncertainty, the sheer surreality of it all – quite like Daniel Bachman's *Almanac Behind*. An audio document of what the environmentalist Hunter Lovins called "global weirding", it finds Bachman blending familiar folk instrumentation – guitar, banjo and harmonium – with emergency radio broadcasts and field recordings largely captured in and around his house in Banco, a tiny rural community on the edge of Virginia's Shenandoah National Park.

"The night that I got the masters back, there was a storm in one of the nearby counties," explains Bachman over a wifi connection installed a few months back. "They got almost five inches of rain in two or three hours. It just levelled the entire mountain community… 40 people went missing that night."

Almanac Behind was born out of such an event. "In January, we had a freak snowstorm that produced really intense, heavy precipitation – caused tree damage, wrecked powerlines," he continues. "We lost power for an extended period because we didn't have a generator at the time. And we're on a well, so we didn't have water," he laughs. "It was pretty wild."

The experience sparked a creative idea. "For six months from January, I'd record all the extreme, anomalous weather events happening. I didn't expect to get a lot of the sounds that are on the record. But things just fell into place."

Bachman was one of the most skilled of a wave of fingerstyle guitarists that emerged from the American underground in the early 2010s. Lately, though, his music has evolved into something more adventurous and exploratory. 2018's *The Morning Star* commenced with a 19 minute track titled "Invocation" that took in fiddle, shruti box, bells and harmonium. Last year's double LP *Axacan*, meanwhile, found Bachman leaning into environmental recording, "Deep Adaptation" and "Blues In The Anthropocene" conjuring murky beauty and creeping dread from sounds of the natural world. Field recording and found sounds have been part of his music-making since his teens, he says. "But now, I'm trying to put real intention behind it."

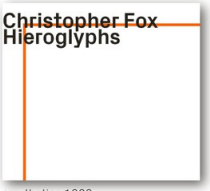
Almanac Behind feels like an extension and a distillation of his approach on *Axacan*, assembling references and allusions like a puzzle. On "3:24 AM KHB36 (When The World's On Fire)", Bachman takes up slide guitar and plays The Carter Family's "When The World's On Fire" over the sound of a smoke inhalation alert and a voice reading the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's 2022 report. "Wildfire (Smoke Over Old Rag)" mixes droning harmonium and YouTube videos of Virginia wildfire responders with sounds derived from feeding the image of a sunset at Madison County's Old Rag Mountain into a computer program designed by his friend Zeph Mann. Describing his process, Bachman shows me one of his trustiest tools – his grandfather's wind-up radio, tuned to KHB36, a weather station that issues warnings of thunderstorms and flash floods. "When you're recording with a small budget, field recording and getting creative with the stretching and moulding of sound opens up a lot of creative doors," he says.

Folk music is a form prone to cosy nostalgia, but Bachman's guitar and banjo playing have a cool, elemental quality, as if he's worked to whittle away any trace of hokiness. I mention John Fahey, godfather of American Primitive music, who in his irascible later years dismissed his earlier output as "cosmic sentimentalism". "I hear what he is saying," says Bachman. "Being a bit older and looking back on years of trying to make guitar music, there are limitations to what the instrument can do." He talks about his conscious attempts to "weird" his sound. "To get that kind of distanced, woozy, out of touch feel, I'd play a lot. I'd find a tuning or a scale that felt good for the occasion and then improvise. Then I'll take the recordings, put them into the computer, cut up each note and reassemble them to make a completely new thing." Despite his innovative approach, Bachman still sees his music as within the folk tradition. He talks about *Almanac Behind* in the context of old disaster songs: "Like "The Wreck Of The Old 97", about the Danville train disaster, or all those old-time bluegrass songs about floods. What we're living through right now is absolutely historic, and I like thinking about it in those terms."

His folkloric approach has also seen Bachman turn author. Earlier this year, he published *Sycamore City & Other True Stories*, a short story collection with an accompanying soundtrack reflecting on colonialism and the extractive nature of American capitalism, partly inspired by research into his own family tree. "In the 17th and 18th century, my ancestors were definitely involved in all sorts of horrifying stuff – Indian removal, that sort of thing," he says. "Raising awareness of these histories and incorporating them into my music is something I'm interested in doing. I'm trying to lead with the history and the scholarship. Communicating that can be hard when you're making instrumental music. But I'm trying to do it respectfully. You know, in a real way." ☐ Daniel Bachman's *Almanac Behind* is released by Three Lobed Recordings

We also have an ear for the future.
Check them now before they get "Revisited" #帽子 www.hathut.com

ezz-thetics 1029

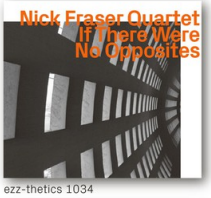


ezz-thetics 1030

ezz-thetics 1031

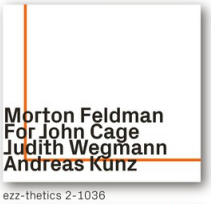
ezz-thetics 1032

ezz-thetics 1033



ezz-thetics 1034

ezz-thetics 1035



ezz-thetics 2-1036

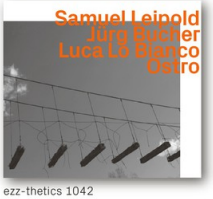
ezz-thetics 1037

ezz-thetics 1038

ezz-thetics 1039

ezz-thetics 1040

ezz-thetics 2-1041



ezz-thetics 1042

ezz-thetics 1043

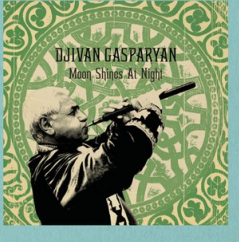
A.M. BOYS

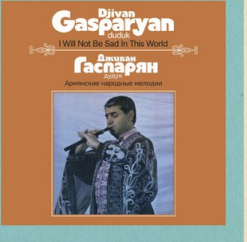
ANALOG SYNTHS
DRUM MACHINES
SPACE ECHO
VOICE

"Beautifully layered minimalist electronic music" — Under The Radar

Distance Decay LP available on vinyl at amboys.bandcamp.com and all streaming services

Djivan Gasparyan





New vinyl editions of two classic albums by the Armenian master of the duduk

"Without doubt one of the most beautiful and soulful recordings I have ever heard"
Brian Eno

"It sounds for all intents like music from another world"
Los Angeles Times

ALL SAINTS RECORDS

Government crackdowns have moved the focal point of Istanbul's scene to its Asian shore where metal and underground music reign surpreme in **Kadıköy**. By **Robert Rigney**

Enis Kizilkaya in Hammer Muzik, Kadıköy

I meet with Gaye Su Akyol in Bina, a cool, understated bar in Kadıköy – the Asian-side district of Istanbul that's a base of the kemalist opposition CHP (Republican People's Party), and which has in recent years been shaping up as Istanbul's newest post-Gezi entertainment quarter of choice. Akyol, born and raised in Kadıköy, has played her role in making the district the popular nightlife hub it has become today. Indeed, she tells me, the new focus on Kadıköy is a return to the roots of Turkish rock 'n' roll. "Kadıköy has always been a kind of place for underground music. One thinks of Erkin Koray, Bariş Manco, two great names of Anatolian rock who have lived in Kadıköy. When you go back in history, you always feel a cultural bond there."

One famous spot is the so-called Akmar Pasajı, an old school bazaar-style used book and music emporium in downtown Kadıköy, which stands today as an alternative to the European-side Unkapanı, hub of Istanbul's more lucrative Arabesk music industry. Here in dusty passageways you gets a whiff of the 1980s as you amble under flickering LED screens past small cubbyholes overcrowded with used books and mostly metal vinyl.

Ensconced by old LPs and T-shirts, I find Enis Kizilkaya, a long-haired, bearded Turkish metal freak who has been working at Hammer Muzik, formerly a metal and rap label, today a record shop specialising in Turkish metal vinyl. "Many young people have started playing in bands here in Kadıköy," he says. "Rehearsing and starting to release albums, putting on shows. So it's a great scene now." In the words of Gaye Su Akyol, "Metal is making a comeback, and not just in Kadıköy, but all over Istanbul, and that can only be a good thing."

Istanbul is a continent-straddling megalopolis with upwards of 15 million inhabitants – so big, it's said, that some children growing up on the peninsula have never seen the sea. Yet the city has relatively few cultural centres where a club culture can take root and thrive. Most of Istanbul consists of a loose, atomised conglomeration of towns and villages with very little in the way of nightlife. Until recently any action was in Taksim, a stretch on European-side Istanbul flanking Istiklal Caddesi, a long, thriving, pedestrian street with Türkü bars, rock clubs, gypsy jazz locales, neon-lit cellar dives, atmospheric meyhanas and rooftop clubs.

"Taksim was the place for cultural life for hundreds of years," says Aslı Doğan of Kolektif Istanbul, a sextet playing, in their words, "Turko-Balkanic progressive wedding music". "Kadıköy was a small fishing village when actors were meeting in Taksim cafes with all the screenwriters and movie producers. The same thing for music. Whenever we had a concert after the soundcheck we could go listen to the soundchecks of other bands… sitting right next to you were the best writers, the best poets who had ever lived in Turkey."

All that came to an abrupt end with the heavy-handed quashing of the Gezi Park protests in 2012, which coincided with – as many see it – a concerted effort on the part of Turkey's conservative government to root out places where dissident youth could take hold and mobilise.

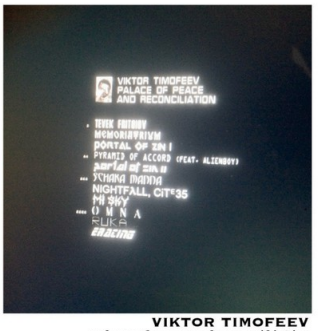
The end of Taksim nightlife was in fact long presaged. Even as far back as the 50s, right wing idealogues called for the demolishing of Beyoğlu, the run-down, densely inhabited district in which Taksim sits. And this is exactly what the current Turkish government has started, through drastic slum clearances in the diverse Tarlabaşı quarter. Conservatives finally realised their dreams of a new sanitised Taksim, crowned with a new neo-Ottoman mosque complex, catering mainly to Arab tourists.

"They killed it," says Gaye Su Akyol. "Taksim is now just rubbish trying to become something from dust. They destroyed it because it was the centre of the Turkish Republic. It was intentional."

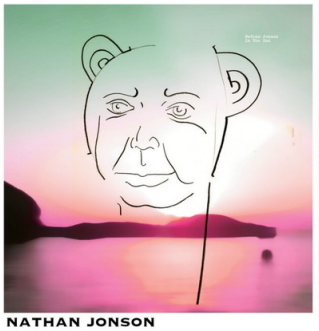
Kadıköy is now the district where Istanbul's hedonists and hipsters seek inspiration and refuge from bulldozers, harassment and restrictive urban ordinances. In part, it's a fairly uninspiring residential district replete with an upscale shopping high street and an endlessly concrete seaside promenade, The focus of the new scene, however, remains its old çarşı – downtown commercial quarter – with its warren of small, narrow streets overlooking the water. Foreigners have started showing up, taking advantage of the weak Turkish lira and easing of Covid restrictions. Beer and rakı flow freely, headscarves are a rarity, and every second person seems to have a tattoo. Alexander Hacke, the narrator and protagonist of Fatih Akin's Istanbul music documentary *Crossing The Bridge*, remarks that "Istanbul is a rock city". That remains the case 15 years on – especially here in Kadıköy. ☐ Gaye Su Akyol contributes The Inner Sleeve column this issue: see page 87

Courtesy Enis Kizilkaya

NIHITI
a new kind of weather EP
LP/MP3



VIKTOR TIMOFEEV
palace of peace and reconciliation
LP/MP3



NATHAN JONSON
in the end
LP/MP3

NIHITI
sustained
LP/MP3

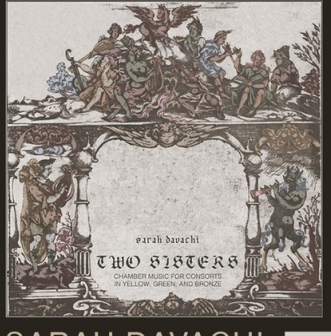
POP MUSIC FOR EXTREME PEOPLE

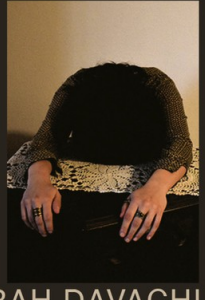
LO BIT LANDSCAPES

we want sounds

Masahiko Togashi with Don Cherry & Charlie Haden "Song of Soil" 1979
LP with 8-Page Booklet / CD - Out Now

NOW AVAILABLE ON LATE MUSIC
WWW.LATEMUSIC.CO





SARAH DAVACHI
TWO SISTERS
2xLP / 2xCD

SARAH DAVACHI
IN CONCERT &
IN RESIDENCE
2xCD

SARAH DAVACHI . IN CONCERT & IN RESIDENCE

IN THE GRAND LUXE HALL (2016) FOR AMPLIFIED CELLO AND SINE TONES
STILE VUOTO (2018) FOR PIPE ORGAN AND STRING TRIO
HARMONIES IN GREY (2021) FOR SOLO ORGAN
HARMONIES IN GREEN (2021) FOR SOLO ORGAN
LOWER VISIONS (2021) IN RESIDENCE AT THE NATIONAL MUSIC CENTRE

Invisible Jukebox

Each month we play an artist or group a series of records which they are asked to comment on – with no prior knowledge of what they are about to hear. This month it's the turn of

Kali Malone

Tested by **Derek Walmsley**. Photography by **Diana Pfammatter**

US/Swedish composer Kali Malone uses organs, ensembles, electronics and site-specific performances to explore the effect of tuning systems and extended durations. Born in Colorado, she first fell into underground music circles as a teen while living in Denver and Western Massachusetts. A chance encounter with Ellen Arkbro at a house show in New York led to a transatlantic friendship, and Malone first visited her fellow composer in Sweden and later relocated in 2012.

Though classically trained as a singer, Malone turned to studying electroacoustic composition at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm. Her research focused on systems of tuning and their cultural context, and a practical adjunct of this was a long running apprenticeship with organ builder Jan Börjeson, which whom she visited and worked with instruments across Sweden. This led to her composing for smaller pipe organs at the music conservatory in Stockholm, and some of these pieces comprised the 2018 album *Organ Dirges 2016–2017*.

Malone had been introduced by Arkbro to Stockholm's longrunning Elektronmusikstudion (EMS) and Fylkingen organisations, which nurtured an interest in synthesisers and tapes, and opened the composer up to a network of likeminded music heads in the city. In 2014, The group Hästköttskandalen saw Malone and Arkbro hook up with Marta Forsberg, Maria W Horn and Elsa Bergman, and they recorded the album *Spacegirls* in a former mortuary near Sabbatsberg Hospital. Malone and Horn started the label collective XKatedral in 2015, primarily releasing small cassette editions of Stockholm affiliated music.

After releasing the extended organ cycle *The Sacrificial Code* in 2019, Malone was commissioned by the French Groupe de Recherches Musicales (GRM) organisation to produce a work for its Acousmonium loudspeaker orchestra. The 2022 album *Living Torch* was the result, with Malone playing Éliane Radigue's ARP 2500 synthesiser accompanied by trombone and bass clarinet. Her newest work is *Does Spring Hide Its Joy*, a trio recording with Stephen O'Malley and Lucy Railton, released this month by Ideologic Organ.

The jukebox took place in Berlin, the day after her performance at the city's X100 festival dedicated to the work of Iannis Xenakis.

Gene Moore
"Main Title"
From *Carnival Of Souls OST* (MsMusic/Citadel) 2006

[Olivier] Messiaen? [After a minute] It's film music. 1940s?

It's from 1962 – an independent horror movie.

A Hammer film? It sounds like silent film music, but it's not a silent film? It's like the Wurlitzer, the cinema organ sound. With the celeste stop.

Are you into horror films at all?

I like [Dario] Argento films. I've been watching a couple of bad horror films recently, but I get so scared [laughs]. The classics, *Nosferatu* of course, I love the Werner Herzog *Nosferatu*.

Klaus Kinski's incredible in that.

And my fashion icon, what's her name, also from [Andrzej Żuławski's] *Possession*… Isabelle Adjani.

This is from a film called *Carnival Of Souls*. It's got a great plot in which an organist is involved in a car crash, and ends up haunted by sounds of the instrument. Your work is intimately connected with organs, as someone who plays and has also tuned them. When did that connection start?

It happened, formally, when I was writing my Bachelor's thesis, and I was writing about tuning systems. I went to go and interview the organ tuner Jan Börjeson, and we got along so well I started working for him. We'd travel around Sweden tuning pipe organs, I loved it.

What kind of insights did he share with you?

So many. When I met him, I had a hypothesis for my thesis, and was really interested in the cultural artefacts of temperament, and the affect that tuning has on a society, and how values of a society might be reflected in temperament systems. An organ tuning can be different based on elevation, if it's a small town or a big city, the humidity levels. It was really interesting to hear how the more complex temperament systems that were leaning towards equal temperament were in the biggest cities, with academies and listeners wanting complex key changes, and then you would have very pure meantone temperaments in the small villages that were mainly using the organ for religious purposes, and common people would be able to tune it because the periodicity would be comprehensible. You would have just ratios and then you could tune it till the beating stops. It was fascinating to get that justification from him. Every tuner in these villages would have their own flavour of how they tune. To encounter older temperaments now totally depends if the organs are Baroque organs or Renaissance organs, because you can't always take an organ that is tuned in one way and put it a different way. When you go to tune an organ you need to first catch the A – the frequencies change from organ to organ, and you can't recalibrate everything or make everything in 440 hertz, because it's just not going to stay in tune. So you have to catch the A, make that the fundamental, and then recalibrate everything from there. I've been really interested in tuning small organs in just intonation, and creating my own temperament system, and it only works for a day, because it goes out of tune. So it takes me five hours to tune, and then I have an hour of concentration afterwards, start composing and recording, and then it's out of tune the next day.

Were there any organs when you were going around Sweden or elsewhere that you thought, this is the best one, if I could install one in my house, it would be this?

I had the best day of my life last week in Barcelona. I became friends with this organ builder named Albert Blancafort, and he invited me to play four of his pipe organs in one day. One is in the Barcelona cathedral, another is in the Palau Güell which Gaudi built, San Felip Neri church, and finally the Sagrada Familia, which is the highest security place I've had to get access to [laughs]. It was at midnight, we had to wait with the security, get all of our IDs scanned, have security escort us to the organ.

Every few months I encounter an organ where the timbre of it is almost like the human voice. I love to find organs where just the principal stop, the foundational stop, has a very complex sound like a voice. My favourite one is in Amsterdam at the Orgelpark, it's a replica of an organ and tuning from 1470, built using all the same materials – same wood, lead in the pipes, and the timbre is just out of this world. It sounds like the hum of a grandfather or something, it's just so irregular, every note sounds totally different.

And you like that kind of chaotic or natural variation?

Certain organs, where they're very neutral and glossy and work everywhere, it's not as interesting to me, because I'm really interested in finding the textural pretty bits of the instrument.

Kali Malone in the control room of Kraftwerk, Berlin, November 2022

Éliane Radigue

"Mouvement 1"

From *Naldjorlak I II III* (Shiiin) 2013

Wow, this is beautiful.

Any thoughts about what the instruments might be?

Cello, sinewaves, granular synthesis… it sounds like the really high frequencies from the bow hitting the strings are being processed.

Not that, but other sounds of the cello are finding their way through.

There's a lot of artists that it could be their piece. I'm trying to think based off the sound quality of the recording. It feels contemporary. Maybe one of my friends or colleagues. I really feel Leila Bordreuil in here, but I also think about Yair Elazar Glotman.

They tuned the cello so it matches the resonant frequency of the instrument, so they are exploring what's called the wolf tone of the instrument.

It's not Charles Curtis? So I can imagine this is Radigue writing for Curtis. So there you go, I got there.

It's not granular synthesis, but the quality of the sound is so complex, because he's playing, and the instrument is responding, and that's such an interesting quality. It's one of Radigue's acoustic works, which are different to her electronic works.

But the syntax of the pieces is just threaded together in all of her work, tying you into these waves, it's this weaving of timbres and you start to understand the weaving pattern after some time. I probably started listening to her when I was 18. The first CD I got from her from the library was the *Feedback Works* for magnetic tape. Then I got into *Adnos* very heavily. It's incredible how with such minimal material and instructions the continuity of her pieces comes out in every format.

And the acoustic pieces have the verbal relationships with the instrumentalists, like Charles Curtis.

My friend Yoann Durant, who was in the ONCEIM orchestra, said she would invite the musicians one by one to her apartment and show them a magazine with a picture of some waves on the ocean to start a conversation. I actually got permission to use her ARP 2500 synthesizer, and it's on the first part of *Living Torch*, that was such an emotional moment for me.

This is a drone piece. A lot of your pieces use drones in various ways. Any thoughts about what makes a good drone?

I don't know if I'd call this a drone piece. There's so much happening in here, there's lots of events, especially with the acoustic pieces, there's inconsistencies, and you really feel the fragility and the struggle and the risk that's involved in playing.

For me, when I make music that's of long duration, I just try to create something that allows me to slip into the structure of the music and not anticipate, and not try to figure out what's round the next corner, but just be very present, and not overthinking. Not anticipatory listening, not judgmental listening.

There's a lot of resonant frequencies in this, but her pieces draw your attention to different parts of the harmonic spectrum. So for me, when I'm in the mixing process, I'll listen to things while taking a nap, and then if there's something wrong with the mix, the frequency will wake me up. I really want to listen without my eyes, without the visual stimuli. All that's very important in creating the mental effect of being present.

There's totally a thread between all of my work, but I use tons of harmonies, and there's so many melodies happening. There's a lot of gestural events as well. To just classify it as drone is a bit too easy. And in this piece, it's not just one note, actually, it's a whole harmonic spectrum or partials and timbres that are weaving in and out of cadence.

Velvet Cacoon

"Laudanum"

From *Genevieve* (Southern Lord) 2004

I don't know this band particularly, but I know a lot of things that sound like it! But I had to wait for the vocals to come in.

Any thoughts when it might be from?

It sounds like a new death/doom band that is doing processing to sound like they're from the 1990s. But only processing on the drums and guitar because the voice is too clean. There's a little bit of Japanese grind-style chorus guitars, and also a bit like Disembowelment… and then I was kind of reminiscing about Jesu a little bit, because there's some poignant shoegaze riffs in this, too.

It's a band from the Pacific Northwest from the 2000s, Velvet Cacoon. What's your relationship with rock and metal… what did you listen to growing up?

Well, I grew up in Denver. There were a lot of amazing DIY venues, warehouses and all ages events. All my friends were much older than me, so I got invited to go to a bunch of cool shows when I was really young. At that time most of my friends were in the hardcore scene. I left Denver when I was 16, and after that bands like Blood Incantation and Spectral Voice started coming out. I know those guys and spent a lot of time with them.

When I was first getting into the organ I was loving Skepticism, the Finnish doom band from the 90s. Listen to *Stormcrowfleet*! It's a little bit cheesy doom, but it's a record they made when they were 17, and the production quality is everything you're not supposed to do. I think they went into the studio and the engineer just left. A little bit of a secret that's not a secret any more, one of the songs on *Sacrificial Code*, I was kind of doing a cover of it but putting it in canon [form]. Not an exact cover, just loose impressions. But I loved that band. I wasn't so into grind or death metal, I was really into doom and black metal. Now I play a lot with Stephen O'Malley of Sunn O))), and we've recorded some black metal demos, but it's just for fun for now.

Do you welcome the emotional weight of something like metal in your music?

Oh totally, of course it's going to affect my music. When I was listening to a lot of metal I was also listening to a lot of Renaissance music. And there's elements of cantus firmus and counterpoint in metal, some very complex riffs and there's a science to it, similar to polyphonic composition.

Staying with your early years, I understand meeting Ellen Arkbro was an important factor in you moving to Europe.

Oh yeah, it was a magical moment! I was 16, I had to go to New York City to get a fake ID to go to my friend's show in Hudson, New York. But I didn't have anywhere to stay. At that point I was living in Western Massachusetts and then sometimes I would practise going into New York, but it would always fail, I would end up sleeping at Grand Central or something. I wrote to the coolest girl I knew from my school, who was now in New York, and she was going to an apartment show at this guy Jonathan Wood Vincent's place and invited me. I was by far the youngest person there, there were these cultured thirtysomethings and I was this 16 year old girl with my little backpack. And I saw Ellen, and she had this shaved head, she looked like this beautiful alien, and we became infatuated with each other. I went to visit her [in Stockholm] for Christmas about a year later, and she introduced me to EMS and Fylkingen. My whole life changed, she's like a sister to me.

Horse Lords

"Mess Mend"

From *Comradely Objects* (RVNG Intl) 2022

[At piano intro] Harry Partch? [rhythm section comes in]. OK, no! At first, though… can I listen to the beginning again? It gives you a lot of information about the tuning. It feels like it's some John Cale project or affiliate. Not close at all? There's some just [intonation] stuff happening, though.

You went back to the start, and the keyboard they're using is a Korg M1, which is a keyboard you can easily tune in all sorts of ways. It's in just intonation, and I think all the band are in just intonation here. It's an American group, contemporary.

Oh, it's contemporary?

I call them a group, but they don't see themselves as a rock band, they just see themselves as a group of players using just intonation. They're from Baltimore.

Horse Lords

Oh wait, I just played with them this weekend… Horse Lords. I had dinner with them. It reminds me so much of the skronk stuff from the 2010s. I hadn't seen a band like that in a long time. The festival was curated by Low, and they invited us to play [before the death of the band's Mimi Parker]… it's so sad.

We interviewed Horse Lords in *The Wire* 465, and they had some interesting ideas about how using just intonation helps them access notes that other bands can't get to: "Reclaiming pitch through the idea of timbre and vice versa." Like you said earlier, two notes resonating creates other notes and textures and so on. Is is the same with you?

Oh, 100 per cent, yeah. If I use 11 note just intonation which I did last night with *Living Torch*, it's completely

Margaret Rorison

Unseen Worlds

HAVING BEEN
BUILT ON SAND

WITH ANOTHER BASE
(BASIS) IN FACT

AUF SAND GEBAUT

MIT EINER ANDERN BASIS
TATSÄCHLICH

DICKIE LANDRY
LAWRENCE WEINER

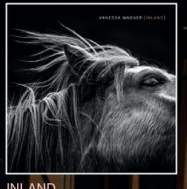
VANESSA WAGNER

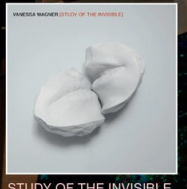
VANESSA WAGNER COLLECTS
SOLO PIANO STUDIES OF GRACEFUL
MINIMALISM AND RARE FINESSE.

[...] a splendid primer that sets the familiar alongside the undeservedly more obscure. THE LINE OF BEST FIT

Knocking on the door of transcendence.
LOUD AND QUIET

[...] lovingly caressed, expressed, and captured, the piano truly becomes an extension of sound within.
HEADPHONE COMMUTE


INLAND


STUDY OF THE INVISIBLE

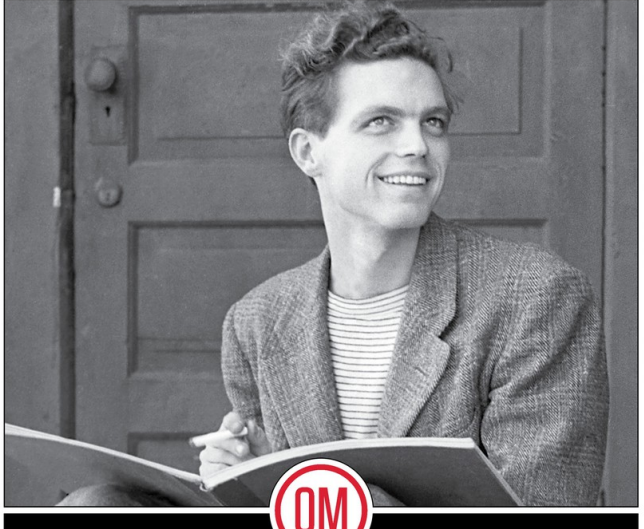
MIRRORED

©LudovicLetot

infiné

BLACK TRUFFLE
2022
www.blacktrufflerecords.com

LOU HARRISON
SONATA FOR UNACCOMPANIED VIOLIN (1936)
Kate Stenberg, violin



OTHER MINDS records
otherminds.org
othermindsrecords.bandcamp.com

Written in 1936 by the then-teenaged Lou Harrison, this previously unrecorded work reveals the genius to come. Available as a CD single, or digital download.

different emotional territory to *Does Spring Hide Its Joy*, which is seven note just intonation.

Can you describe some of those emotional effects? Because that's sometimes ignored in discussions of tuning.

It's so hard to talk about because it's so … wordless. It's easy to simplify, that sounds sad, that sounds heroic, and it feels like it's an oversimplification of a feeling that's so deep and unexplainable. Because when you hear these chords, and they're chords that you don't really hear so often in Western music, it's a new feeling, so it's a bit indescribable, and that's what I'm searching for when I'm working with harmony. It's an excavation of self-discovery in putting together these chords and seeing how they make me feel. A lot of times I get disgusted or put off by them, but then I keep coming back to them and those are the ones that really grow on me.

Like eating olives when you're a child or something.

There's certain chords that at first I have a lot of friction with, and now they're so natural and consonant for me to gravitate to that it's a bit cliched for me to use them. And that's what's so exciting about tuning for me, there's infinite possibilities, so much unexplored harmonic territory, and that territory equates to self-discovery, and different resonances that chords can have within yourself and society and the culture.

Which territories, if any, are unexplored?

Firstly, around the world, there's so many tunings that ethnomusicologists have tried to document, but in the process of documenting, it also creates standardisation, and diminishes some of the tunings. It's like that in Arabic music, and also probably with Hindustani music and many others as well. The process of documentation and putting the math on the paper, once something gets written down, all the unwritten accounts dissolve and they become folk traditions or something. There's some really great professors in music, like Marc Sabat, but in Stockholm I learned so much from Ellen and Marcus Pal who studied with La Monte Young.

Lester Bowie's New York Organ Ensemble "Funky T"

From *Funky T Cool T* (DIW) 1991

Ah, the brass section sounds so good. I'm a bit obsessed with brass right now, I've just finished a new record that's brass quintet music, and I love the process of mixing it for headphones. You can do so much articulation with the stereo placement of the instruments. The trumpet sound on this recording, it's such a beautiful soft and fluid sound. It's such a versatile instrument.

This is Lester Bowie from The Art Ensemble Of Chicago. It's his New York Organ Ensemble. Any thoughts on who the organist might be?

Is it an organist who's usually using Hammond?

I'm not quite sure, but I'd say their work is pretty split between organ and piano. It's Amina Claudine Myers. She's played in all sorts of groups. The organ has formal European resonances, but also gospel resonances like this, where there's a kind of call and response dynamic. I was wondering if you welcome those church resonances into your work.

Well, if you're playing in a church, it's going to sound like a church! When I'm recording my music I record my organs really close. I want to get the materiality of the sound from the pipes. And that's why I started writing for brass quintet as well, the sound of the air and the material of the instrument. But in a live concert, you can't unchurch a church. And when I'm playing, I'm just looking at the keys, and I don't have all the symbolism the audience is looking at, and they're probably interpreting the music through the symbolism of the church, the architecture and all that, and that's not part of my agenda or idea, that's just where the instrument is. But I think it's fun with titling to go into those concepts. The titles on *The Sacrifical Code* means a lot to me. Every one of those pieces was a chapter of my thesis that I never finished [laughs]. But they're also poetic titles. It would sound a little bit half-baked to break it down. It's poetic, everyone can interpret it in their own way.

With the music from *The Sacrifical Code*, I was really inspired by the restrictions that early polyphonic composers would have placed upon them by the church. You have this four part harmony, a canonical calculation, a type of algorithm to follow. I was super inspired by that way of calculating an aesthetic experience, it's similar to an architecture of a church, or any sort of artwork of that period which was defined and rooted in mathematics, which was taken to be the most truthful or divine thing. I've found this musical structure that is this well that never runs dry.

Bow Gamelan Ensemble

Bow Gamelan Ensemble "Concrete Barges"

YouTube

It's like [Michaelangelo Antonioni's film] *Red Desert* meets the Fluxus movement. The setting, or location.

It's probably filmed in a less interesting location than Antonioni's film. Although maybe not? This is in or around the River Thames. I'd never seen this video until recently, with them playing in the river wearing wading costumes, using the debris and industrial infrastructure. So this is from the 1980s, and these three have a connection with the UK improv scene.

What was that group before Throbbing Gristle, performance art group… COUM Transmissions? But that's a bit more transgressive than this.

This is a bit later. I'm not sure these people would call themselves performance artists. This is Bow Gamelan Ensemble, Anne Bean, Paul Burwell, Richard Wilson.

And they would always do these site specific interventions?

Pretty much. Bow was, at that time, a post-industrial area in East London. The group would do some very long performances, this one was ten hours or so. I wanted to ask about duration, as you've done some very extended works, and I was wondering what quality that brought to your music.

I think when you do intentional events for a long period of time, it's to honour the event and lose yourself in it as well. Especially something like this, a long performance piece or theatre piece, it requires so much dedication and promise from the performer and the audience. We're going to go in and do this together, and we're going to have an experience through it, and the endurance of it, the perseverance, all of that creates a really special bond with yourself and the audience. Especially with the trio with Stephen [O'Malley] and Lucy [Railton], we usually play *Does Spring Hide Its Joy* for 90 minutes, and after 30 minutes, something gets incredible. Our listening, the sensitivity towards everything, just syncs into place. It can take some time for the attention to become more natural and precise. But when we get to 90 minutes I don't want to ever stop.

But I also think the moment of stopping is really important, because it's like a vacuum effect. You feel the gravity change, the materiality of the air, the pressure. You realise that time has gone but you were not experiencing it as you normally do. It's not an effort to lose time, it's a pleasure to give the time and give your attention to something other than yourself or your life for an hour or two.

I suppose there's different ways to conceptualise duration and doing a longer piece. One is that the artist is in control of the environment and can control the listener's environment. Another way to think about it is that audience have a lot of freedom, and they can come in and out. Is one of those closer than the other to what you want to get to with music?

I definitely love the latter, because my compositions are so controlled, but I want the listener to feel that there's these moments that really catch them, that it's a miracle of their own mind and listening that made that happen. It's a secret that they unlock. When I'm working with the organ and I'm making tonnes of tests, I'll be so set on a hypothesis I have. I have to be open, but I also have to be guided at the same time, I have a preordained endpoint but not miss anything on the way that might lead to an unexplored territory.

Do you ever play or compose anything that you're not satisfied with?

Especially in live concerts, there's no room for error in my pieces, it's so binary, and there's no room for improvisation or a bad note. We have a number matrix for all of the rhythmical information, and a flashing metronome, so if we miss one beat, we have to do some counting to get it back. It's unforgiving music, and then we can be really hard on ourselves if we mess up. But we're very good at paying attention for long periods of time so mistakes don't happen often!

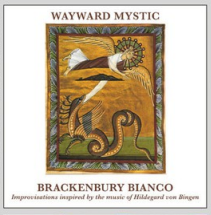
It's so personal to sit on the organ bench with somebody and do this music together. And now I've been teaching some of my friends my pieces, it feels so precious and special to share that with someone I'm really close with, it's becoming like a folk music. Frederikke Hoffmeier has learned some pieces, Leila Bourdreuil and Erik Enocksson, Stephen has learned some pieces. It's like a precious gift or a moment that we share when I invite them into my world, and they are honouring me by playing it with me and learning it and playing together with me. ☐

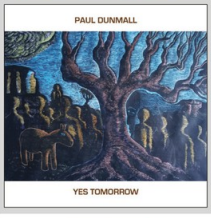
YouTube/Anne Bean

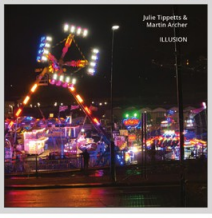
Discus Music

IMPROG • FREE JAZZ
ELECTRONICS
+
SONGFORM

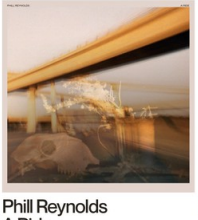
discus-music.co.uk and discusmusic.bandcamp.com





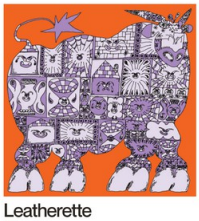


2022
Bronson Recordings nella Zona d'Ombra:

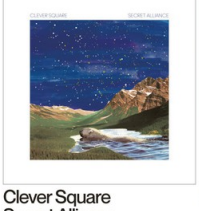


Phill Reynolds
A Ride
(Vinyl, Cd, Digital)

Eugenia Post Meridiem
like i need a tension
(Vinyl, Cd, Digital)



Leatherette
Fiesta
(Vinyl, Cd, Digital)



Clever Square
Secret Alliance
(Vinyl, Cd, Digital)

R.Y.F.
Tutto Brucia OST
from the Motus show
(Vinyl, Digital)

www.bronsonrecordings.com
https://bronsonrecordings.bandcamp.com

Online | On Air | On Sale

To keep up to date with all that is going on in the world of *The Wire* sign up to our Weekly newsletter at thewire.co.uk/newsletters, and follow us on Twitter and Instagram: @thewiremagazine.

Recent items posted on thewire.co.uk

//:

Low

Richard Pinhas

Ustad Noor Bakhsh

Writing
Abi Bliss's 2018 interview with Low from *The Wire* 415, an interview with the late drummer Anton Fier, and an extract from Tomasz Stańko's autobiography.

Audio
An annotated playlist of Richard Pinhas's key collaborations, a mix by Maral, and *The Wire*'s latest Office Ambience playlist.

Video
Animated visuals by Andrew Poppy, and film of an outdoor performance by Ustad Noor Bakhsh.

Listings
Details of forthcoming festivals, concerts, exhibitions, talks, workshops, online streams and other events added daily.

Listen to recent editions of Adventures In Sound And Music

104.4FM

Zvrra

Tengger

Venus Ex Machina

24 November
Meg Woof hosted a guest mix by Chicago DJ and producer Zvrra.

17 November
Chris Bohn played tracks by Elaine Mitchener, Barbara Dane, Tengger, Marisa Anderson and others.

10 November
James Gormley played tracks by Venus Ex Machina, Ben LaMar Gay, M Takara & Carla Boregas, Heith and others.

3 November
Shane Woolman hosted a guest mix by London composer and producer anrimeal.

For full playlists of each show go to thewire.co.uk/audio/on-air.

To listen back to all *The Wire*'s radio shows go to mixcloud.com/thewiremagazine

Adventures In Sound And Music is *The Wire*'s weekly show on Resonance 104.4 FM and Resonance Extra. It is broadcast every Thursday between 9–10:30pm with simultaneous streaming at resonancefm.com

Coming next month: the February 2023 issue of *The Wire*

468

Online at exacteditions.com from

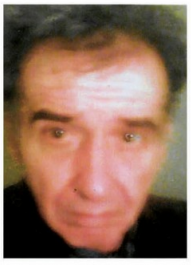
10 Jan

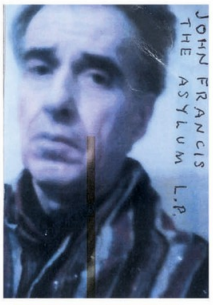
On sale from

12 Jan

Jake Walters (Low); Senta Simond (Pinhas); Hira Abro (Bakhsh); Na Seung (Tengger); Sade English (Venus Ex Machina)

John Francis
Selection Of Poetry 1974 - 2019





The Lou Reichner Band
1980

John Francis

The Asylum CD Price: £4.95
Poetry book *1980* by The Lou Reichner Band (cassette) Price: £4.95

Tel: 07393571141

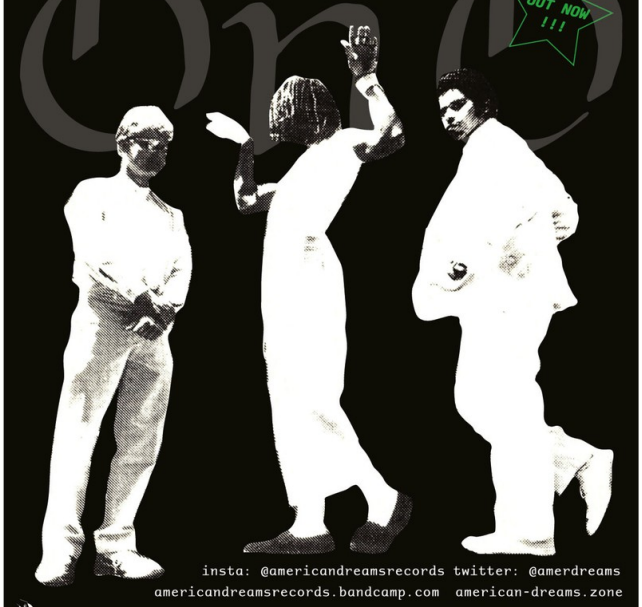
John Francis

"24 Hours" From *The Asylum*, appears on *The Wire Tapper 60* CD
Influenced by glam rock and punk rock

AMERICAN DREAMS RECORDS PROUDLY PRESENTS A VINYL REISSUE OF...

Kate Cincinnati

OUT NOW !!!



insta: @americandreamsrecords twitter: @amerdreams
americandreamsrecords.bandcamp.com american-dreams.zone

CHICAGO LEGENDS DELIVER INDUSTRIAL GOSPEL IN ***KATE CINCINNATI***

THANATOSIS RELEASES WINTER 22—23

THT18 | CD/LP | 25.11

THT19 | 2CD | 16.12

THT20 | CD/MC | 27.1

THT21 | CD | 3.2

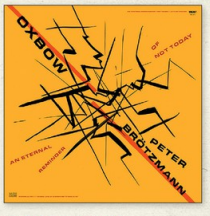
THT22 | 2CD | 10.2

THT18: SUSANA SANTOS SILVA. ALL THE BIRDS AND A TELEPHONE RINGING. **THT19: VÖ.** THE SOUNDS OF VÖ. **THT20: TOMAS HALLONSTEN.** MONOLOG. **THT21: MARIANNE SVAŠEK.** MARWA. **THT22: MIHARU OGURA.** OGURA PLAYS STOCKHAUSEN.

THANATOSIS.BANDCAMP.COM

TROST

www.trost.at



OXBOW & PETER BRÖTZMANN
AN ETERNAL REMINDER OF NOT TODAY
TR211 DoLP/CD

MATS GUSTAFSSON & NU ENSEMBLE
HIDROS 8 – HEAL
TR224 LP/CD

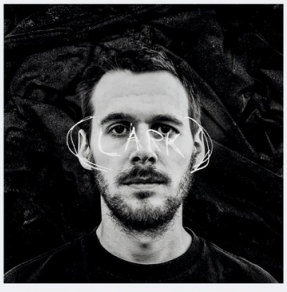
RODRIGO AMADO
REFRACTION SOLO
TR229 CD

BRÖTZMANN/BENNINK
SCHWARZWALDFAHRT
TR230 Book & CD

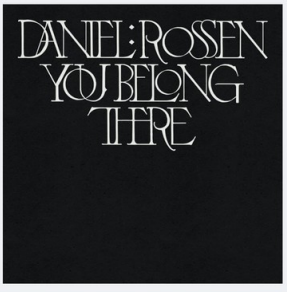
WARP 2022 ●

BIBIO ●
BIB10
↳ WARP352

BROADCAST ●
MICROTRONICS
- VOLUMES 1 & 2
MOTHER IS THE MILKY WAY
MAIDA VALE SESSIONS
↳ WARP335
↳ WARP336
↳ WARP337

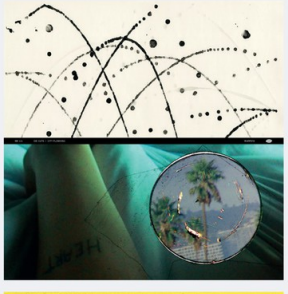


CLARK ●
05-10
BODY RIDDLE
(REMASTERED)
BODY DOUBLE
↳ WARP346
↳ WARP149R
↳ WARP149X



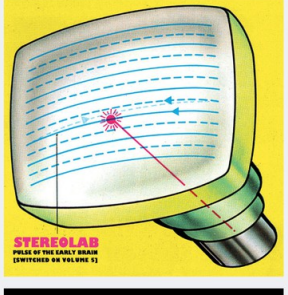
DANIEL ROSSEN ●
YOU BELONG THERE
↳ WARP344

HUDSON MOHAWKE ●
CRY SUGAR
↳ WARP347



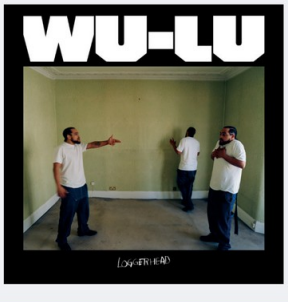
MOUNT KIMBIE ●
MK 3.5: DIE CUTS | CITY PLANNING
↳ WARP319

PLAID ●
FEORM FALORX
↳ WARP356



STEREOLAB ●
PULSE OF THE EARLY BRAIN
[SWITCHED ON VOLUME 5]
↳ D-UHF-D43

VARIOUS ARTISTS ●
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
↳ WARP6R



WU-LU ●
LOGGERHEAD
↳ WARP342

2022 Rewind

Over the next 29 pages we present *The Wire*'s review of the last 12 months in underground sound and music. From the top releases of the year to specialist charts to essays zooming in on essential areas of creative activity, here is your guide to 2022's audio highs and lows. Images by **Leon Chew**

Releases Of The Year

1–50

1 **Lucrecia Dalt**
iAy! (Rvng Intl)

The Colombian sound sculptor invoked extraterrestrial intelligence and ancient geology to create an addictive avant pop that mutated the rhythms of tropicalia, flamenco and bolero. Rob Turner said: "Her music has turned away from abstraction and grown into something more alive. Where once her voice crept about below the surface, gurgling with effects or masked by reverb, in the opening seconds of *iAy!*, she sounds transformed." (October/464)

2 **Moor Mother**
Jazz Codes (ANTI-)

Camae Ayewa approached *Jazz Codes* like a patchwork, assembling diverse collaborators – vocalists Melanie Charles and Wolf Weston, harpist Mary Lattimore, rappers Akai Solo and Fatboi Sharif – to create something sprawling but utterly direct. Rosie Esther Solomon said: "Ayewa imagines possible futures in which Black liberation has been achieved, by pushing the arhythmicality of free jazz into outright non-linearity and pointing towards a more anarchic temporal state." (August/462)

3 **Bill Orcutt**
Music For Four Guitars (Palilalia)

Orcutt started out his career in Harry Pussy, doyens of chaotic noise rock. But what really impressed about *Music For Four Guitars* was its precision, its 14 guitar miniatures bringing to mind the cascading melodies of Steve Reich, or Malian kora music. Daniel Spicer said: "As the album's pragmatically highbrow title suggests, there is, again, a marked minimalist intent… there's so much going on in these dense constructions, you're likely to hear new layers and combinations with each spin." (October/464)

4 **Oren Ambarchi**
Shebang (Drag City)

Ambarchi forged the four movements of *Shebang* from an elaborate system of guitar triggers and a cast of luminaries – among them composer Konrad Sprenger, Jim O'Rourke, percussionist Joe Talia and pedal steel master BJ Cole. The trick is that it felt so singular, diffuse pieces locking together like a puzzle. Julian Cowley said: "Polyrhythmic intricacy is embraced not as an end in itself, but as an index of sound in restless motion, shaping this alluring music's unpredictable evolution, implementing change and renewal." (October/464)

5 **Kali Malone**
Living Torch (Portraits GRM)

Started before the death of Editions Mego/Portraits GRM's Peter Rehberg, *Living Torch* is a tribute to his vision. Malone sidelined her pipe organ in favour of a soundworld comprised of trombone, bass clarinet, processed drones and the ARP 2500 synth used by Éliane Radigue. Edwin Pouncey said: "The mood of Malone's playing becomes darker, sparser, surging with electricity as the drone level increases. It solemnly enters and exits with quiet, stately grace, her synthesizer occasionally sounding more like plucked blues guitar strings or strummed metal chords." (September/463)

6 **Sarah Davachi**
Two Sisters (Late Music)

Two Sisters further solidified Sarah Davachi's reputation as a leader in the field of minimalism. Across its 90 minutes, the Los Angeles based composer drew on pipe organ, choir, carillon, woodwind, strings, electronic tones and, on "Alas, Departing" – an interpretation of a 15th century English song – the human voice. Emily Pothast said: "Air is an omnipresent agent in Davachi's extensive use of the pipe organ, as on "Vanity Of Ages" – an exquisitely slow unfolding of clustered tones that give rise to a shimmering microtonality." (September/463)

7 **billy woods**
Aethiopes (Backwoodz Studioz)

Through his solo work and as half of Armand Hammer, New York based rapper billy woods has been on a slow but steady ascent. This link-up with producer Preservation painted a claustrophobic picture, woods's labyrinthine rhymes musing on Blackness and life after the pandemic. Mosi Reeves said: ""No Hard Feelings" is a maelstrom of free jazz saxophone and flute; "The Doldrums" undulates with bass percussion as he gets lost in teenage vignettes that may or may not be autobiographical." (May/459)

8 **Björk**
Fossora (One Little Independent)

Death, gabber, mushrooms: Björk's tenth album was made up of potent ingredients, but its message was one of renewal. "Sorrowful Soil" paid tribute to her mother, while "Ancestress" and "Her Mother's House" featured her children Sindri and Ísadóra. Leah Kardos said: "The mycelial universe serves as a poetic metaphor for discussing the sensuality and intelligence of the natural world, existential entanglements and ancestral roots, cycles of decomposition and nourishment, loss, survival and rapture." (November/465)

9 **Silvia Tarozzi & Deborah Walker**
Canti Di Guerra, Di Lavoro E D'Amore (Unseen Worlds)

On Canti Di Guerra…, the violinist and cellist of new music ensemble Ensemble Dedalus unearthed and interpreted traditional songs of the 'mondine' – 1940s female rice weeders who took a stand against Italian fascism. Peter Margasak said: "These gorgeous songs, usually sung by a lead voice and a raucously soulful backing choir, doubled as work songs and acts of political protest, espousing left wing ideology and feminist concerns." (June/460)

10 **Carl Stone**
Wat Dong Moon Lek (Unseen Worlds)

Carl Stone is a half-century into his career – so how is it that his music still sounds so fresh? *Wat Dong Moon Lek* sees the West Coast composer working in Max/MSP, taking scraps from disparate genres – pop, country, jazz – and pasting them into anarchic, hook-packed pop collage. Claire Biddles said: "The tracks are all made so methodically, and yet there's such alchemy here, each track feeling fizzy and alive with potential directions." (June/460)

11 ***Fragility Of Sounds***
Various (Ventil)

What does it mean to think of sound as fragile? An artistic research project conceived by the composer-performer Pia Palme, *Fragility Of Sounds* collected responses to this theme from artists including Electric Indigo, Elaine Mitchener, Elisabeth Schimana and Séverine Ballon. The music within, created with Austrian ensemble Schallfeld, could be soft, brittle, delicate or abrasive – but was always thoughtful and often surprising. Brian Morton said: "These lovely pieces come with a considerable freight of research." (January 2023/467)

12 **Soul Glo**
Diaspora Problems (Epitaph)

"Who gon' beat my ass! Who the fuck gon' beat my ass?" Few 2022 albums went as hard as the Epitaph debut from African-American hardcore group Soul Glo. "Driponomics" and "Jump!! (Or Get Jumped!!!) ((By The Future))" collide hi-octane punk and rap at warp speed, but it's the presence of vocalist Pierce Jordan that made *Diaspora Problems* gripping, his roar of inchoate rage as authentic spitting societal critique as tales of teenage trauma.

13 **Aldous Harding**
Warm Chris (4AD)

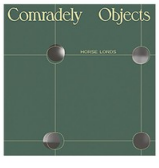
On her fourth album, New Zealand's Aldous Harding embraced the oblique sides of her songwriting: the mystery in a free-associative couplet, the sense of possibility in a song that gestures rather than defines. The music – neatly orchestrated folk pop, produced again by John Parish – went down easily enough. But it was Warm Chris's more eccentric moments that beckoned you back, such as "Leathery Whip", featuring backing vocals from Jason Williamson of Sleaford Mods.

14 **Sun Ra Arkestra**
Living Sky (Omni Sound)

Following on the heels of the first Arkestra LP in 20 years, 2020's *Swirling*, the quick arrival of *Living Sky* proved that LP was no fluke. It's heavier, less song-based than its predecessor, but the production is agreeably lush and the band, led by the 98 year old Marshall Allen, are on fire. Kurt Gottschalk said: "Allen's unmistakable saxophone claims the attention, and his remarkable, abrupt outbursts sound fantastic against well-rehearsed accompaniment." (November/465)

15 **Daniel Bachman**
Almanac Behind (Three Lobed)

In 2022, it felt like extreme weather was becoming the norm. *Almanac Behind* found Daniel Bachman – an American Primitive guitarist from rural Virginia – documenting signs of climate breakdown, assembling folksy improvisations, emergency radio transmissions and environmental field recordings from around his storm-lashed locale. Louis Pattison said: "Folk music is a form prone to cosy nostalgia, but Bachman's guitar and banjo playing has a cool, elemental quality, as if he's worked to whittle away any trace of hokiness." (January 2023/467)



16 **Horse Lords**
Comradely Objects (Rvng Intl)

On *Comradely Objects*, the Baltimore quartet Horse Lords used free improvisation, just intonation and a fascination for utopian architecture as a way to eject their music beyond conventional orbits. These polyrhythmic jams sound playful, but pop with hidden complexity. Bill Meyer said: "Their rhythms gain added impact from a willingness to leave a good thing alone; instead of introducing elements that work against the grooves, as they sometimes did on *The Common Task*, they drive them home." (November/465)

17 **Mary Halvorson**
Amaryllis & Belladonna (Nonesuch)

Conceived during the lockdown months, these two parallel pieces – released together on vinyl, but separately on CD and digital – found the Massachusetts guitarist spreading her wings as a composer. Baroque and jagged, sometimes contemplative but others times playful, it's a deep and rich double set. Brian Morton said: "It's very easy to get lost in this music, in the sense of immersively absorbed rather than uncomprehending". (June/460)

18 **Jeff Parker ETA IVtet**
Mondays At The Enfield Tennis Academy (Aguirre/Eremite)

Recorded across three nights in a bar in Los Angeles's Highland Park, this live LP finds Tortoise alum Jeff Parker and his ETA band – drummer Jay Bellerose, bassist Anna Butterss and alto saxophonist Josh Johnson – in spacy mood, their woozily beautiful jams spiked with a twist of boom-bap. Bill Meyer said: "Each musician adopts a groove-plus approach, adding tunes, subtracting beats and spinning tension building, counterintuitive phrases off the common path, but never tripping it up." (December/466)

19 **Claire Rousay & More Eaze**
Never Stop Texting Me (Orange Milk)

Following a 2021 where both established themselves in ambient and drone circles, Claire Rousay and Mari Maurice kicked off 2022 with *Never Stop Texting Me*, an exuberant foray into pop-punk dynamics and glittering hyperpop production that glowed with kawaii energy. Spenser Tomson said: "Rousay and Maurice capture the miniature dopamine hits found scattered through the mundane, picking emotional connections from between the detritus of daily life and plucking out micro-thrills that might otherwise get lost in the mix." (March/457)

20 **Diamanda Galás**
Broken Gargoyles (Intravenal Sound Operations)

The document of a sound installation exhibited at Hanover's Kapellen Leprosarium, a 13th century sanctuary for the infected and infectious, *Broken Gargoyles* found Galás interpreting verse by German expressionist poet Georg Heym atop chilling sound design from collaborator Daniel Neumann. Emily Pothast said: "One of her most diseased offerings to date… she gives voice to the writhing ghosts of medieval lepers, plague victims and wounded soldiers that haunt these two lengthy compositions." (September/463)

21 **Vanessa Rossetto**
The Actress (Erstwhile)

A painter turned sound artist from Texas, on *The Actress*, Rossetto flowed together violin, harp, found sounds and environmental recordings to create a living musique concrète that felt diaristic in a personal way, popping with narrative detail. That its 90 minutes of sound were stretched across two CDs somehow felt necessary, assembled on a scale that you the listener could truly inhabit and lose yourself in. Derek Walmsley said: "An epic travelogue across the spaces of everyday life which accentuates the drama of normality." (January 2023/467)

22 **Coby Sey**
Conduit (AD 93)

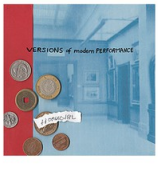
A contemporary of Mica Levi and Klein, Coby Sey's music scrambled grime, jazz and electronic noise to paint a vivid picture of his South London ends. At its heart, though, this was an album about community and connection. Emily Bick said: "*Conduit* is an acknowledgement that, no matter how segmented and targeted and digitally siloed we may be, no one is an island. There's something suspect about the field recordist/above it all flaneur, anyway, and music needs to have a stake in the game to be worth caring about." (September/463)

23 **Hudson Mohawke**
Cry Sugar (Warp)

Scottish producer Ross Birchard has always made music with a maximalist aesthetic, and in that respect *Cry Sugar* was his most representative album yet, its 63 minutes of neon-soaked club music drawing on trash culture, multiplex movie scores and what Birchard describes as "American decadence". Any irony couldn't entirely dissolve the joy that pulsed through "Intentions" and "Bicstan".

24 **Ashenspire**
Hostile Architecture (Code666)

From fast fashion sweatshops to the tragedy of Grenfell Tower, Glasgow's Ashenspire raged against injustice, their splenetic black metal comprised of blastbeats, strings, hammered dulcimer and the impassioned roars of Alasdair Dunn. Rosie Esther Solomon said: "It's bleak and unflinching in the face of late capitalist inevitability yet determined and rousing enough to paint a picture of something better." (August/462)



25 **Horsegirl**
Versions Of Modern Performance (Matador)

Chicago trio Horsegirl were between high school and college when *Versions Of Modern Performance* landed in May of this year, but their sound – a slanted, melodic take on indie rock – feels indelibly planted in the 1990s. That "Antiglory" and "Option 8" still landed was a testament to their unruffled cool and enthusiasm for the subject matter. It also raised the question: can it really be nostalgic if you weren't there the first time around?

26 **Moin**
Paste (AD 93)

A collaboration between production duo Raime and the London based percussionist Valentina Magaletti, Moin really hit their stride on *Paste* – a lean fusion of scurrying percussion, found sounds and dissonant guitar of the post-hardcore school. Miloš Hroch said: "The album is filled with the constant tension of things falling apart, as on the spine-tingling "Forgetting Is Like Syrup" where a counterintuitive rhythm and Slint-like guitar melody are corrupted by white noise and digital glitches." (December/466)

27 **The Smile**
A Light For Attracting Attention (XL)

Thom Yorke and Jonny Greenwood left the Radiohead mothership and joined forces with Sons Of Kemet drummer Tom Skinner. With that, The Smile was born, and if *A Light For Attracting Attention* largely worked for the same reason Yorke and Greenwood's parent band works – the mardy choirboy vocals, the push and pull between sneering anger and opiated serenity – there's no doubt it does work here.

28 **Bennie Maupin & Adam Rudolph**
Symphonic Tone Poem For Brother Yusef
(Strut)

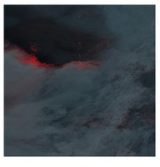
Originally commissioned by the Angel City Jazz Festival to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Yusef Lateef's birth, *Symphonic Tone Poem*… found two jazz veterans in luminous, meditative form. Emily Pothast said: "Such a transformative sonic encounter is a rare and precious experience; a fitting tribute to the towering figure to whom this set is dedicated." (August/462)

29 **Éliane Radigue & Frédéric Blondy**
Occam XXV (Organ Reframed)

London Islington's Union Chapel houses a 19th century hydraulic organ, designed to be amplified by the building's acoustics – the perfect location for French composer and pianist Blondy to take on one of Éliane Radigue's imposing drone works. Richard Thomas said: "There's a kind of anxiety in listening to *Occam XXV* since, as it builds, it is loaded with anticipation and an intensity that is quite physical… the organ's subsonic frequencies make my woofers vibrate so intensely that all it would take is a spark and they could fan an inferno." (April/458)

30 **Robert Storey**
The Eventual Window (Divine Agency)

The errant figure behind pseudonyms like His Grace The Earl Of Killorglin and The Murphies, on *The Eventual Window* post-punk savant Robert Storey stepped out under his own name, shadowed by vocal collaborator Maya Yianni. Clive Bell said: "More elegant, dishevelled disillusion… age has mellowed Storey's lovelorn ballads, but not quelled his way with a live band arrangement or a pithy lyric." (February/456)



31 **Tegh & Adel Poursamadi**
Ima (Injazero)

On *Ima*, sound artist Shahin Entezami and violinist Adel Poursamadi took the traditional music of their native Iran and infused it with ideas sourced from science fiction and avant garde composition; a haunting, near-future vision of the Middle East. Neil Kulkarni said: "This feels only partly a human transmission and that's what makes it so deliciously fresh and new sounding." (August/462)

32 **Devin Townsend**
Lightwork (HevyDevy)

Formerly of the extreme metal group Strapping Young Lad, on *Lightwork* Townsend embarked on a series of exotic hard rock hybrids, crunching motorik and death metal into glacial, Enya-like pop. Spenser Tomson said: "Townsend could be considered a purveyor of humanist metal – delivering enlightenment through music that beams with universal empathy and love." (December/466)

33 **Laura Cannell**
Antiphony Of The Trees (Brawl)

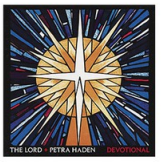
Confined to her home during the pandemic, Cannell tuned into the sound of birdsong in her back garden, first transcribing it and then learning to play it on a variety of recorders – bass, tenor and alto. Spenser Tomson said: "While her imagery and themes are familiar, the starkness with which she presents them is often understated… *Antiphony Of The Trees* brings this starkness front and centre, magnifying the dark and unsettling chill." (May/459)

34 **Dewa Alit & Gamelan Salukat**
Chasing The Phantom (Black Truffle)

Gamelan as a musical form stretches back thousands of years, but Balian master Dewa Alit proved the form was not fixed or immutable. On *Chasing The Phantom*, the second album he and his ensemble Gamelan Salukat have recorded for Oren Ambarchi's Black Truffle, Alit's rank of customised metallophones – assembled to his own tuning system – are beaten in dizzying polyrhythms, or to make staccato sounds that resembled digital glitches.

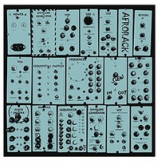
35 **Richard Dawson & Circle**
Henki (Weird World)

Henki was a major piece of wish fulfilment for Tyneside bard Richard Dawson, who called Finnish metal innovators Circle his favourite band. On this collaborative work, they backed him on songs about plant life that explored Greek mythology, spanned ice ages and considered the mysteries of death. Peter Margasak said: "It's the most normal sounding record I've heard from either party, but the singer can't help but entertain even within these surprisingly prim surroundings." (December 2021/454)



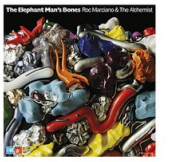
36 **The Lord † Petra Haden**
Devotional (Southern Lord)

For his second outing as The Lord, Sunn O))) founder Greg Anderson joined forces with a long-time collaborator, violinist and vocalist Petra Haden, for a sludge-soaked exploration of the Indian modal scale. James Gormley said: "Haden's nonverbal multitracked vocals entwine with Anderson's guitar, billowing like illuminated fabrics or the plumage of some hunting seabird ducking in and out of view." (October/464)



37 **Afrorack**
The Afrorack (Haluna Kulala)

Brian Bamanya couldn't find the components to build a modular synth in his native Uganda, so he decided to build one from the ground up. The resulting *The Afrorack* was a thrill, modular trickery carried along on limber African polyrhythms. Francis Gooding said: "Bamanya is building on indigenous foundations, but the music here is not a direct translation of tradition to a new format – it is the sui generis development of a novel language, forged by approaching a familiar sonic world from different premises." (August/462)



38 **Roc Marciano & The Alchemist**
The Elephant Man's Bones (Pimpire)

Roc Marciano and The Alchemist both spent time in the shadow of bigger names – the former, as a member of Busta Rhymes's Flipmode Squad, the latter as a producer for 50 Cent and Kendrick Lamar. *The Elephant Man's Bones* prove they deserve top billing, the pair spitting wit, crud and narrative mythmaking to an elegant production that feels like a lounge jazz record spinning in a gangster's crib. Tim Fish said: "No disappointment – the factors that have cultivated reverence are displayed in full force." (January 2023/467)

39 **The Ephemeron Loop**
Psychonautic Escapism (Heat Crimes)

The debut solo album from Miss VR aka Urocerus Gigas aka one half of Leeds duo Guttersnipe, *Psychonautic Escapism* explored a scorching psychedelic extremity, her vocal set adrift in a void of machine gun rhythms, scouring synth washes and nightmarish rave. Dig beneath the noise, though, and you sensed a therapeutic intent, VR using musical hybridisation and digital processing to explore her own experiences as a neurodivergent trans woman.

40 **Julmud**
Tuqoos (Bilna'es)

Made in his studio in Ramallah on the West Bank, Palestinian rapper-producer Julmud's debut album *Tuqoos* fused beats sourced from Arabic music with raps about life in an occupied zone. Miloš Hroch said: "Delicate sampledelia pulled from diverse sources all around the Arab world… its 15 tracks are assemblages of memory, geography and original beatology over disorienting rhythmic frictions that defy expectations." (June/460)

41 **Alvin Curran**
Drumming Up Trouble (Black Truffle)

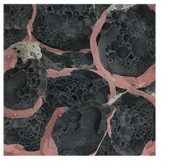
Drumming Up Trouble pulled together a range of percussion experiments new and old from Curran's archive. On the A side, we heard recent experiments with drum machines and hiphop samples, creating plunderphonic steals with a sense of erratic swing. The B side was given over to the older "Field It More", a Roland-powered digi-funk overlaid with piano and processed voices. Brian Morton said: "It's the kind of music that makes you want to go out and chuck a bone into the air, and see if it turns into a spaceship." (January 2023/467)

42 **N Chambers**
Mirage Colony (Soft Profile)

The Seattle musician Norm Chambers, who also recorded as Panabrite, passed away in October 2022 after a long period living with sinus cancer. His last years were prolific, and *Mirage Colony* was one of his best – an organic, richly textured ambient music built from modular synth interlocking samples, which Chambers described as "simulacra of the supernatural zones of deep seas, insectoid intrigue, and avian aural anomalies".

43 **Phelimuncasi**
Ama Gogela (Nyege Nyege Tapes)

A busy year for Kampala's Nyege Nyege Tapes, but Durban trio Phelimuncasi's *Ama Gogela* was a standout of the label's catalogue – a dense, adrenalised take on the gqom sound jam-packed with guests and features. Francis Gooding wrote: "DJ Scoturn marauds midnight deep, South Korean collaborator NET GALA pushes techwards, while Durban local DJ Ndakx brings a rich percussive style on "Kolamula Ukusa"." (June/460)



44 **Eric Chenaux**
Say Laura (Constellation/Murailles Music)

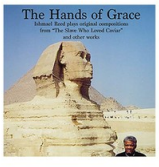
Chenaux's first solo album in four years felt like an elegant refinement of his relaxed style, his unfussy love songs sharing space with extended guitar improvisations imbued with a sense of hazy drift. Vanessa Ague said: "Chenaux croons in a mellow voice throughout, hovering in a dreamy atmosphere that's suggestive of the honeymoon phase of a relationship." (April/458)

45 **Tomáš Niesner**
Bečvou (Warm Winters Ltd)

Bečvou takes its name from Bečva, a river in the Czech Republic which was polluted in September 2020 by chemical leaks, which killed off some 40 tonnes of wildlife. On his debut for Warm Winters Ltd, Tomáš Niesner walked 100 kilometres from the river's spring to where it joined the Morava, taking field recordings along the way. Melding these with fingerstyle guitar, synth and zither, the result was undeniably a thing of beauty, but tinged with anger, sadness and grief.

46 **Brian Eno**
FOREVERANDEVERNOMORE (Opal/UMC)

Eno picked up the microphone for the first time since 2005's *Another Day On Earth* for an album of harmonic drone and simmering ambience, addressing climate change and the future of humanity. Leah Kardos said: "*FOREVERANDEVERNOMORE* is evocative and restrained, guiding the listener through regret, nihilism and sorrow towards something vaguely hopeful and optimistic." (November/465)



47 **Ishmael Reed**
The Hands Of Grace (Reading Group)

Still active in his eighties, last year the poet and playwright Ishmael Reed staged a new play, *The Slave Who Loved Caviar*, at New York's Theater for the New City. *The Hands Of Grace* collected music Reed composed for that show – a mix of elegiac solo piano and ensemble pieces, culminating in a tender ode to Reed's late daughter, "Timothy".

48 **Oren Ambarchi/Johan Berthling/Andreas Werliin**
Ghosted (Drag City)

Ghosted strikes a distinct groove that you'd hesitate to call jazz, rock, or anything else for that matter. With Ambarchi coaxing snickering sounds from his guitar, Berthling juggling acoustic and electric bass and Werliin keeping a firm but flexible rhythm, these four tracks stood as a testament to the pleasures of repetition. Spenser Tomson said: "Ambarchi is like a director whose work is equally engaging when it takes the form of an action packed chase movie or a low-key thriller." (June/460)

49 **Deliluh**
Fault Lines (Tin Angel)

Now pared back to the twosome of Kyle Knapp and Julius Pedersen, Toronto's Deliluh made a virtue of the space, crafting a noirish sound characterised by brooding desert motorik, nocturnal jazz and – on "Syndicate II" – a nod to The Fall. Edwin Pouncey said: "Armed with limited instrumentation and Knapp's understated vocal, the album's seven tracks take on a form of storytelling, made alive with synthesized fluttering bat wings, bouts of sax squall and sinewy electronic backbeats." (July/461)

50 **Bitchin Bajas**
Bajascillators (Drag City)

Bitchin Bajas once conducted themselves with a sort of hyperactive profligacy, so the five year gestation of *Bajascillators* felt like an eternity. But this textured, jammy, deeply chill music was worth the wait. Peter Margasak said: "Hypnotic melodies cycle through endless mutations, deft puzzle piece constructions are honed and sharpened into fat-free miniatures. Even on "Geomancy" you can hear the electric organ improvisation pushing toward infinity." (October/464)

The Electorate
This year's chart was compiled from the votes of the following contributors and staff (each voter's individual release of the year is shown in brackets)

Yewande Adeniran (Commodo *Deft 1s*)
Vanessa Ague (String Orchestra Of Brooklyn *enfolding*)
Jennifer Lucy Allan (Bill Orcutt *Music For Four Guitars*)
Steve Barker (The Bug *Absent Riddim*)
Robert Barry (Alvin Curran *Drumming Up Trouble*)
Dan Barrow (Sarah Davachi *Two Sisters*)
Clive Bell (Ann Eysermans *For Trainspotters Only*)
Emily Bick (Emeka Ogboh *6°30'33.372"N 3°22'0.66" E*)
Claire Biddles (Soul Glo *Diaspora Problems*)
Matthew Blackwell (Daniel Bachman *Almanac Behind*)
Helena Celle (Ashenspire *Hostile Architecture*)
Julian Cowley (Oren Ambarchi *Shebang*)
Raymond Cummings (Jeff Parker's ETA IVtet *Mondays At The Enfield Tennis Academy*)
Phil England (Avalanche Kaito *Avalanche Kaito*)
Misha Farrant (MYEN *SPECTERTAPE*)
Tim Fish (billy woods *Church*)
Phil Freeman (Phelimuncasi *Ama Gogela*)
Noel Gardner (Alison Cotton *The Portrait You Painted Of Me*)
Francis Gooding (Roc Marciano & The Alchemist *The Elephant Man's Bones*)
James Gormley (Tegh & Adel Poursamadi *Ima*)
Kurt Gottschalk (Shiva Feshareki *Turning World*)
Louise Gray (Laura Cannell *Antiphony Of The Trees*)
George Grella (Dewa Alit & Gamelan Salukat *Chasing The Phantom*)
Jason Gross (Petrol Girls *Baby*)
James Gui (Sobs *Air Guitar*)
Andy Hamilton (Mike Baggetta/Jim Keltner/Mike Watt *Everywhen We Go*)
Tony Herrington (Various *Fragility Of Sounds*)
Miloš Hroch (Lucrecia Dalt *iAy!*)
Jo Hutton (Moor Mother *Jazz Codes*)
Leah Kardos (Alice Cohen *Moonrising*)
Joshua Minsoo Kim (Moin *Paste*)
Biba Kopf (FaUSt featuring Keiji Haino *This Is The Right Path*)
Steph Kretowicz (Rosalia *Motomami*)
Neil Kulkarni (Sasami *Squeeze*)
Dave Mandl (Robert Storey *The Eventual Window*)
Peter Margasak (Aldous Harding *Warm Chris*)
Marc Masters (Water Damage *Repeater*)
Ryan Meehan (Horsegirl *Versions Of Modern Performance*)
Bill Meyer (Pelt *Reticence/Resistance*)
John Morrison (Soul Glo *Diaspora Problems*)
Brian Morton (The Waterboys *All Souls Hill*)
Joe Muggs (Hudson Mohawke *Cry Sugar*)
Daniel Neofetou (Louie Rice & Luciano Maggiore *Skirting*)
Louis Pattison (The Reds, Pinks & Purples *Summer At Land's End*)
Antonio Poscic (Kyle Kidd *Soothsayer*)
Emily Pothast (N Chambers *Mirage Colony*)
Edwin Pouncey (Kali Malone *Living Torch*)
Mosi Reeves (Beyoncé *Renaissance*)
Tony Rettman (The Retail Simps *Reverberant Scratch: 9 Shots In The Dark*)
Simon Reynolds (Dry Cleaning *Stumpwork*)
Mariam Rezaei (Sarah Davachi *Two Sisters*)
Ilia Rogatchevski (Hekla *Xiuxiuejar*)
Dave Segal (MC Schmidt *From Fountains To Sewers*)
Stewart Smith (Moor Mother *Jazz Codes*)
Rosie Esther Solomon (Richard Dawson + Circle *Henki*)
Daniel Spicer (Sun Ra Arkestra *Living Sky*)
Richard Stacey (Smellington Piff *Roma Supreme*)
Joseph Stannard (Devin Townsend *Lightwork*)
Spenser Tomson (Claire Rousay & More Eaze *Never Stop Texting Me*)
Rob Turner (billy woods *Aethiopes*)
Derek Walmsley (Lucrecia Dalt *iAy!*)
Meg Woof (Trevor Mathison *From Signal To Decay Volume 2*)
Shane Woolman (Julmud *Tuqoos*)
Rob Young (The Smile *A Light For Attracting Attention*)

Critics' reflections

Vanessa Ague
I spent a lot of 2022 wondering if I had stopped enjoying live music. So, I started reviewing concerts again in the hopes of getting myself out to gigs. After all, concert reviews were how I got my start in professional criticism and my favourite thing to write for many years. Ten months went by, and things started to feel a little more normal as I wrote, though I wasn't sure they'd be the same as I remembered them. I find it difficult to capture the freedom shows used to give me knowing there's a pandemic still going on outside. But at an Alex G concert this fall, I finally felt the spark — it was driven by nostalgia for music I loved when I was a late teen, but also by the fact that it was a moment where I could let everything go. The joy of live music comes from the careless abandon, the feeling that the only thing that matters is being there, then. I know that feeling is still out there. It's time to grasp it.

Jennifer Lucy Allan
I started a new book, found I needed vocabulary for shapes and colours instead of sounds. Spent time getting better at radio. Foghorn book came out in paperback. Live highlights were a one-off collaboration between Dali de Saint Paul, Agathe Max, Yoshino Shigihara, Valentina Magaletti and Laura Phillips at the penultimate EP/64 live series; percussionists wrapping a large plush giraffe in brown paper at London's Royal Albert Hall for Jennifer Walshe's Proms performance; Sean Paul playing all the hits; Laibach in a foundry in a French village outside Lourdes (and finally seeing what those church trips were about from my Catholic schooldays); Sue Lynch and Crystabel Riley at Avalon Cafe, Éliane Radigue's *Occam* for church organ in Islington, and singing along to Kim Gordon (*"Airbnbeeee"*). Searched out Sogo Ishii films, Toshio Matsumoto shorts, and Frank Perry's broken Americana. (Finally) made peace with the behavioural expectations of the gallery and started badly bootlegging paintings I can't afford (Francis Bacon, Ben Nicholson). Books: wowed by Ahmad Ibn Fadlan's tenth century travel writing, Nader Khalili's architectural dreams; poems by Octavio Armand, and every single novel by Edna O'Brien. Counterflows, Supersonic, Supernormal, Unsound, Festival of New, After Dark: for the sonics and the social, thank you.

Dan Barrow
There were moments this year where it seemed like the intervening time since December 2019 never happened, temporality only felt in its out-of-jointness. The art that meant the most to me inhabited, emotionally, that disjointed, condensed space and time. The artform with which I still engage the most is film, though it was a lean year for cinema releases. A few revelations nonetheless: Ryusuke Hamaguchi's *Drive My Car* (seen in a brutal snowstorm) and *Happy Hour*; Jean-Luc Godard and Anne-Marie Miéville's *Numéro Deux* (JLG forever); Lucrecia Martel's *La Ciénaga*; Hong Sang-Soo's *Right Now, Wrong Then* (loser metaphysics); RW Fassbinder's bitter masterpiece of self-deception *Fox And His Friends*; Paul Schrader's *Mishima* and *Light Sleeper* (tales of the eternal return). Most touring musicians pass over Sheffield now, but Oren Ambarchi and Karl D'Silva at Rotherham's Unity Centre was a splendid reintroduction to live music, while Sote's overwhelming abstract hardcore at DINA, Apartment House at Firth Hall and a performance of Morton Feldman's *Crippled Symmetry* at the Cathedral suspended time exquisitely. After a few years off I picked up Proust again and the astonishing slow philosophical torrent of "Sodom And Gomorrah" was ample reward.

Ensemble Nist-Nah

Robert Barry
In March 2020, the last event I attended before lockdown – pretty much the last time I left the house – was Bergen's Borealis Festival. Returning this year for my first post-pandemic festival, then, felt a little strange, going back to many of the same venues, seeing some of the same faces. Strange, but apt, in a way, as if bookending that odd period. And more than worth it for Roscoe Mitchell's incredible closing performance. I was fortunate to see Mitchell twice this year – the second closer to home, at the London Contemporary Music Festival, where I was also thrilled by concerts by Joëlle Léandre, Mariam Rezaei, and Katalin Ladik. Festivals aside, 2022 has been a good year for weird sounds on film, whether Howard Shore's brooding soundtrack for *Crimes Of The Future*, Eiko Ishibashi's more lapidary score for *Drive My Car* or the many peculiar noises passing through Peter Strickland's *Flux Gourmet*. I've barely broken the seal yet, but my copy of Elena Biserna's new book *Walking From Scores* arrived in the post the other day and from the cursory browse I've given it so far, I can already tell it's going to be right up my street.

Clive Bell
January: Nell Leyshon's wonderfully moving play about Cecil Sharp collecting folk songs in Somerset, at the Hampstead Theatre, London. March: Dave Smith plays the new piano at Iklectik. His programme is entirely made up from protest songs from around the world, in his own distinctive arrangements. Tibet, Gaza and the Uyghurs feature. Also in March: Will Guthrie's Nist-Nah gamelan ensemble take Cafe Oto by storm. April: the Nodosus improvising quintet launch their beautiful album at Iklectik. May: Hannah Marshall plays a fine solo cello set at Cafe Oto, followed by Jessika Kenney and Eyvind Kang. June: Apartment House play John Cage's bewitching *Eight*, curated by the ever alert Music We'd Like To Hear team. September: I play a gig with my son Max Hallett and Raimund Wong at Brixton's Windmill. A small but perfectly formed audience assure us that we smashed it.

Emily Bick
Early in the year, Pere Ubu's cosmic road tripping with a medieval tour through *The Canterbury Tales* was a carnivalesque riot of tall tales and novelty store fake boobs. AMM's final show, without John Tilbury but with a gnomic art history lesson by Keith Rowe, was the end of an era for a stalwart improvising unit – though Mazen Kerbaj's A Trio, as seen at Meakusma with their experimentations with all kinds of plumbing kit, could easily take up their lead as improvising innovators. Sort of like A Trio are Phish to AMM's Grateful Dead.

Zubin Kanga's Cyborg Soloists showcase was full of playful compositional experiments with cybernetics, AI and movement that went both goofy and dark, and Matana Roberts gave a powerful performance as bandleader at Barbican's Milton Court, entering and leaving the stage balancing a peacock feather in her hand as a symbol of the fragility of life.

Films: *Neptune Frost* is the kind of brilliant Technicolor sci-fi spectacle, packed with sharp political commentary, an innovative score and costumes to drool over, that belongs up in that highest tier of cult films with *Liquid Sky* and *Blade Runner*. Cronenberg's new *Crimes Of The Future* also deserves praise for its sly humour, absolute dedication to bodily autonomy and equal opportunities for women characters to be pervy creeps. Books: Michael Bracewell's haunting *Unfinished Business*, out this month, about loss, ageing and how to keep on living an aesthetic life.

Finally, Carolee Schneemann: Body Politics at the Barbican was the best thing I've seen all year, just a joyous celebration of life, freedom, sex, art and cats. What else do you need?

Claire Biddles
Aside from a few notable exceptions – including the revelatory but very different films *Flux Gourmet* and *Blue Jean* – the standout culture of my year largely originated before 2022. After two years of holding on desperately to the idea of a present and a future, perhaps I now feel comfortable exploring the past again. I was utterly transported by *The Invisibles*, the 1990s magnum opus of my favourite comics writer Grant Morrison, and by a season of films by mid-century Japanese auteur Kinuyo Tanaka at the cinema where I work.

Most of all, I felt transformed by the return of My Chemical Romance, a band I have loved for 20 years, who toured for the first time since 2013. What could have been an easy cash-grab for a lesser group was instead the start of a re-energised, anti-nostalgia second act: songs were reworked with the intervening years in mind, and frontman Gerard Way shunned the onstage masks of his twenties in favour of embracing his true weirdo 45 year old self. Watching their show in Glasgow, as a weirdo 35 year old still uneasy about the next decade(s), was the most joyful and affirming moment of the year.

Courtesy Will Guthrie

Merry Pranksters

Performers messing with skits, games, food, deconstruction and parody are bringing the spirit of vaudeville back to underground and DIY music. By **Stewart Smith**

Robert Ridley-Shackleton

In his recent BBC stand-up special *Snowflake*, Stewart Lee eviscerates the taboo-busting claims of edgelord comedians. "If he was really saying the unsayable, Ricky Gervais, he'd be doing 47 minutes of trying to say things that literally can't be said," Lee crows, before launching into several minutes of choked utterances that bear an uncanny resemblance to the vocal improvisations of Phil Minton. Lee is a noted free improvisation fan, and there are resonances between his comedy's virtuosic use of timing and repetition and music.

The music hall antics of UK improvisors Lol Coxhill, Alan Tomlinson and Steve Beresford always had an affinity with comedy. And today, absurdist performance continues to thrive on the weirdo fringes of improvised music, overlapping with the DIY noise underground via portals like Dylan Nyoukis's Brighton label Chocolate Monk. Far removed from the chortling levity of bourgeois British comedy, these artists explore a darker, weirder form of humour, but their art is inclusive and joyful, a celebration of difference.

Active since the early 2000s, Secluded Bronte are a project featuring brothers Adam and Jonathan Bohman, and composer and writer Richard Thomas. "All too often it's presumed what we do is some form of post-Cage non-idiomatic free improvisation with text," writes Thomas in *The Wire* 465. Instead, their sets are built around stories and songs, interspersed with James Holcombe's short films. Their marvellous 2022 set at Oxfordshire's Supernormal festival (released digitally by Ffordd Allan) features bleeping synthesizers, post-punk guitar, tape wobble and much bowing and scraping amid a mundane yet mysterious yarn about a secondhand camera.

This narrative approach is shared by younger artists like Max Syedtollan, whose *Four Assignments* takes the listener on a picaresque adventure through archaeological sites, accompanied by the modernist chamber music of Plus-Minus Ensemble. Syedtollan performs the piece live as a lecture, the academic rigour of his slides adding to the fun.

Simon Holliday

The Bohmans' hairy Scottish nephews Usurper – Ali Robertson and Malcy Duff – have been making their own noises since the mid-2000s, alongside comics and working with inclusive ensemble Sonic Bothy. Generally, the Edinburgh duo's sets involve them facing off across a table full of amplified junk and tapes, which they scrape, rattle and mangle between stilted conversations, wheezes and groans: a Samuel Beckett play via Seymour Glass's neo-dadaist noise bible *Bananafish*. For Counterflows in 2018, Usurper scaled their operations up into an elaborate game within a play, combining improv with the narrative elements and prop work of Duff's solo "live comix".

Usurper's fellow travellers include Firas Khnaisser, Fritz Welch, Rob Churm, Ash Reid and Acrid Lactations, all of whom explore various aspects of sound making, text and visuals in their performance. They're also champions of Olivia Furey, an Irish artist based in Edinburgh who takes on a disruptive and hysterical persona in her performances. *Hyper Mundane*, the film she made for her degree show in 2019, opens with Furey haranguing audience members for talking through her performance. "I worked really hard on this music and I'd like to think someone was here to listen," she huffs before slamming her fist down on a distortion pedal. Of course, nobody is talking through the set, making her protestations even more ridiculous. Furey is committed, winning the audience over with each fourth wall breaking tantrum. What could simply be a parody of a pretentious noise musician becomes a hilarious and righteous intervention.

A similar sense of commitment fuels the performances of Robert Ridley-Shackleton, the self-styled Cardboard Prince. Singing, dancing and ad-libbing to DIY electro funk tunes, Ridley-Shackleton is an underground showman who isn't afraid to show his vulnerable side. He touches on personal hardships and mental health issues, while grappling with malfunctioning equipment and timing glitches. The sincerity of the performances makes them heroically uplifting.

Territorial Gobbing, aka Theo Gowans, has issued hundreds of tapes and CD-Rs in recent years, but he's at the peak of his powers on stage. Bringing a youthful energy to his tabletop junk sets, Gowans combines manic gestures with dead-on comic timing. A 2022 Cafe Oto performance saw him pulling tape from a cassette player, shoving the unspooled ribbons into his gob and slurping on them like ferric noodles. As hilarious as it is, it's also a clever subversion of tape's function – more of a prop than a sound source.

Gowans makes great use of food, scattering corn puffs around the room and pausing sets to munch on a spring roll. But the undisputed champion of culinary sound-making is *CHEWn! Zine* and its proprietor Matt, whose noise cookery sets were a highlight of lockdown broadcasting by North of England crews Tusk and TOPH. Watching him juggle boiling pots of spaghetti and pans of popcorn was a hair-raising experience, the bubbling and sizzling punctuated by percussive salvso from wooden spoons and kitchen knives.

I'm hopeful that 2023 brings fresh action from Yol, whose barked repetitions are as unnerving as they are comedic, and Luke Poot, whose *Richard And Judy: The Opera* takes DIY dada to epic heights. Performed at Tusk Fringe 2019, the opera lays bare the monstrous banality of British daytime TV, with Poot leering over recordings of Richard Madeley's inane commentaries. Sporting creepy Madeley masks, a Greek chorus chants the presenter's name, before tearing up tabloid newspapers and launching into a cacophony of air horns. Such performances are as unsettling as they are funny: perhaps the only sane response to the simultaneously mundane and absurd horror of these times. ☐

Minami Saeki (left) and Taku Sugimoto

Matthew Blackwell
Halfway through 2022, I moved from frostbitten Iowa, US to balmy Tenerife, Spain. Aside from the expected challenges, this meant finding a new circle of raritos musicales. Before I had even left, an interview with French musician Pierre Bastien led me to his label Discrepant and their partner Keroxen, who host an annual festival in a repurposed industrial fuel tank on the Santa Cruz pier. The global network of out-music aficionados takes care of its own, and works quickly.

An unexpected balm in this transition was Taku Sugimoto's YouTube channel. Views of each video rarely hit the 400 mark, and it's easy to see why: they are unrepentantly amateurish, with a lot of background noise and not a lot of music. Sugimoto might be standing in a park or a back alley, coaxing single notes out of his guitar. Sometimes collaborators like Toshiya Tsunoda show up and help out (the best video by far is a live version of 2021's *Snare Drum +*, released on Zhu Wenbo's Zoomin' Night). But for me, these performances are a reminder that wherever you go, there are people out there in the streets, making art. You just have to know where to look.

Helena Celle
As I imagine is the case with many presently, I find my dwindling resources limiting my media consumption to the previously acquired. My commutes have been spent reading Mervyn Peake's *Gormenghast*, a series aptly concerning an undead empire preoccupied with fulfilling archaic tradition at the expense of its correspondingly fated underclass. Similar grievances were aired at Ashenspire's launch for their album *Hostile Architecture* at Glasgow's Old Hairdressers, an exemplary demonstration of black metal reconfigured towards progressive ideals, the likes of which are contemporaneously chronicled in *Black Metal Rainbows*, an essential collection of essays edited by Daniel Lukes.

Such artists defiantly designate themselves adversaries to the ghosts of *Gormenghast*, who perpetually retread perennial faults, unwilling to confront their fear of difference. Colonial moralism continued to elude death this year, with a 30th anniversary reissue of *Ghostwatch*, the BBC's disinherited totem to mass hysteria, courtesy of 100 Films. Its barbed interrogation of an audience relationship to state media is not without anachronism of its own however, as it lazily castigates gender variance as an essentialist signifier of evil. Although perhaps this is not such an antiquated notion, given that officiated advocacy of such scapegoating continues to thrive despite its necrotic stench.

Raymond Cummings
Whenever anyone asks me how I am, I tend to say something like, "I've had my ups and my downs, but all things considered, I'm OK." This year, let's focus on the positive. Like Pavement's triumphant reunion tour stop in Washington, DC back in October, or a feral Wolf Eyes and a resurgent Leslie Keffer flooding the zone with dynamite aural eczema, or Pusha T reaching his full potential with *It's Almost Dry*, or how *Atlanta*'s third season zagged ambitiously before its fourth and final season zigged sagaciously. Jordan Peele's *Nope* was dope. Amyl & The Sniffers and Upchuck live – on the same bill! – both blew holes in the ozone layer. Jeff Parker's solo work finally clicked for me with the sprawling, stoned *Mondays At The Enfield Tennis Academy*.

Reckoning with the late 20th century via Robert Caro's thick Lyndon Johnson biographies and the late Barbara Ehrenreich's classic *Nickel & Dimed* was an edifying way to come to terms with the present when not continuing to sip John Ashbery poems. Catching *Heat* in a movie theatre for the first time since 1996 was a revelation. I also wandered through more art museums and galleries than any year in recent memory and while those experiences do sometimes blend together into a single whirl of colour, meaning and panache, they always inspired a devotional calm. If you haven't been lately, maybe it's time to change that. Thank me later.

Tim Fish
Live music was undoubtedly the cultural highlight of my year. Following years of relentless gig attendance and the veritable drought that the pandemic brought with it, I was raring to get back among the masses. The two events that stood out the most were dissimilar, yet they both served as a beautiful reminder of the spirit of community within music. The first was Armand Hammer's show in April, which saw billy woods and Elucid bring their acclaimed act to a live setting and, in turn, to a selection of loyal fans. Venue issues aside, the show was a triumph and allowed me to finally witness two artists who I greatly admire bring their chemistry to life in the physical realm. At the other end of the musical scale came the Bang Face weekender. Within the vaguely dystopian setting of Southport Holiday Park, I discovered a microcosm of everything rave culture had meant to me in the late 90s and early 00s. Trouble-free and inclusive, it was an event that rejuvenated my soul and filled my heart with nostalgia.

The literary world continued that theme thanks to Jim Ottewill's superb book *Out Of Space: How UK Cities Shaped Rave Culture*. It provided a map of electronic music's havens around the country, as well as positing what the future holds for event spaces now that property development is top of the agenda in most cities. So, while the decimation of clubland might have seemed absolute over the last few years, those who understand the culture will know that rave always finds a way.

Phil Freeman
For me, 2022 was a year of cultural production, not just consumption. My book *Ugly Beauty: Jazz In The 21st Century* was released in February, and in August, my label Burning Ambulance Music put out CDs by Breath Of Air (guitarist Brandon Ross, violinist Charles Burnham, drummer Warren Benbow), and Inner Voices, a solo with overdubs and electronics effort by saxophonist José Lencatre. Now I'm working on a new book, a biography of Cecil Taylor to be published in 2024.

I watched more movies than I expected to this year (though I never set foot in a theatre). The most notable were three which injected racial and class politics into horror with great intelligence and clarity of vision: Zach Cregger's *Barbarian*, Babak Anvari's *I Came By*, and Nia DaCosta's 2021 remake/reimagining of *Candyman*. Though each has something individual to say, they slot together very well as a kind of unofficial, atomised trilogy about gentrification, marginalisation and predation.

Francis Gooding
Reading Dan Charnas's book *Dilla Time* led to an immersion in Jay Dee productions, some of which I hadn't really spent time with in decades, or had overlooked. The best of them really are something else: the hypnotic Billy Paul loop on Steve Spacek's "Let The Dollar Circulate", revolving in sympathy with the lyric it samples; the exquisite, far-sighted flip of Stereolab's "Come And Play In The Milky Night" for Busta Rhymes's "Show Me What You Got" (overlook the chorus and it's one of Busta's most consummate performances, which flowers into perfect synergy with the micro-delays and adrenalised inner space so central to Dilla's production); the see-sawing, irresistible propulsion of Common's "Thelonious".

Elsewhere, I was introduced to Jacquetta Hawkes's profoundly odd book *A Land*; read the Gododdin and the Book of Taliesin for the first time; tried to work out how much of the early ECM catalogue I can actually get along with (answer: Mal Waldron, Bennie Maupin, Michael Naura, Dave Holland, Julian Priester… I guess I'll try again when I'm more grown up); loved shows by Collocutor and Park Jiha; couldn't understand why I had never seen Ngozi Onwurah's *Welcome II The Terrordome* until now; marvelled at William Kentridge at the Royal Academy and Hew Locke's *The Procession* at the Tate; and remembered again, for the first time since childhood, what being worried about nuclear war feels like.

Kurt Gottschalk
New works in the new music world rarely receive more than a performance or two. Happily, though, 2022 became a career retrospective for Julia Wolfe, one of the founders of New York's Bang On A Can, which over the last 35 years has become a vital institution for preserving and presenting music in the amorphous and overlapping realms of contemporary composition, popular song and free improvisation. I got to hear Wolfe's string quartets at BOAC's Long Play festival in Brooklyn in April and her *Steel Hammer* at their Loud Weekend in Massachusetts in July. I heard Ensemble Signal play *Cruel Sister* and violinist Tessa Lark take possession of *With a blue dress on* during Wolfe's Carnegie Hall residency. And So Percussion played *Forbidden Love* – written for percussionists playing string instruments – at the Time:Spans Festival in Manhattan.

Going through my mother's records over Thanksgiving, I found Johnny Cash's remarkable, nine minute "The Legend Of John Henry's Hammer" and Jonathan Guyot Smith singing "The Two Sisters", songs I heard Wolfe's radical interpretations of earlier in the year. It was another chance to reflect on the composer's talent for speaking to history and folklore in ways both fresh and invigorating.

Louise Gray
Three Éliane Radigue concerts have given me space to think and room to wonder.

Taku Sugimoto/YouTube

Flexed Fingers Talk

A new wave of turntablists is experimenting with finger needles or mixing up compositions and field recordings to warp the fabric of reality. By **Rob Turner**

Victoria Shen

Tuning into WFMU in the last days of 2021, I ran into a soft piece, crawling with disembodied voices, bursts of static and what sounded like pockets of entirely dead air. For a minute or so, it was as if the station was bleeding into another frequency. When the DJ returned to the mic, it turned out I'd been listening to the latest set from the Peruvian turntablist Maria Chavez. That quietly dazzling cut – "Crossing Some Territory" – was from a recent duo performance in which she was unveiling a new set-up: four turntables, each fitted with a double needle, allowing her to spin eight separate records (or, more likely with Chavez, eight shards of broken vinyl) simultaneously.

Flexing the needle count can make abstract turntablism sound like an arms race, ramping up from John Cage's *Imaginary Landscape No 5* (composed for "any 42 phonograph records" back in 1952) to the wall of 180 decks that formed Philip Jeck's 1993 installation *Vinyl Requiem*. In the new turntablism, though, the scale has changed. Jeck passed away in 2022, but he'd long abandoned monumentality in favour of the fragile, microscopic textures of sand and mycobionts. There are stretches of *Resistenza*, the posthumous live set that Touch recently released to mark what would have been his 70th birthday, where all you can hear is space.

Chavez, too, is drawn to reduction and excavation. Borrowing a line from Vivienne Westwood, she tells me that she's interested in zooming in, "trying to find the primitive seed in the mud". There's an important aspect of self-care to this: she's been avoiding loud sounds for the past few years while recovering from brain surgery. But unsurprisingly – after all, Chavez has written a book on extended turntablism – there's also some carefully developed theory here, drawing on visual art and anti-racist feminist critique. With its striking tactility, her current method drifts away from even the most buried memories of music in Jeck's late work, seeing the record itself as a lump of matter.

Arriving at turntablism fairly recently, as a veteran of the noise scene, Victoria Shen aka Evicshen has taken a similarly materialist approach, sourcing her discs from the pavements of San Francisco. A recent 12" *The Hair Gag* was produced by snapping sets by Aaron Dilloway and herself in half, glueing them together, and taking resin casts of the Frankenstein whole. She cheerfully describes the (visibly lumpy) product as a "beastly aural amalgam". On stage, her audiophile-baiting toolkit boasts bullwhips, violin bows and acrylic nails, all with styluses attached.

Shen went through an unlikely rush of online fame this year, when Beyoncé's team ripped off her needle-nails idea for a "Break My Soul" teaser video. She objected, and they ended up apologising and ordering a bespoke set. It's a great story, but it risks overshadowing the sharpness of the invention itself. Glancing back to her early job as a licensed nail technician, Shen has fused a number of turntablism's current strands into a single punk object. With their extreme form of embodied tactility and nifty proliferation of needles (she can manipulate up to five grooves with one hand), the nails are a breakthrough in extended technique, and a neat subversion of a gendered tradition.

While Chavez and Shen happily reshape (and demolish) their materials, there's another area of contemporary turntablism where the fetishised wax disappears altogether. The tech behind vinyl emulation has been around for decades, with RZA claiming he sunk millions into the idea around the time of 1997's *Wu-Tang Forever*. And, while early controllers were mostly naff and laggy, newer tools (like Traktor and Serato) allow DJs to manipulate digital audio in real time, spinning blank timecode vinyl on regular decks. The roots of the idea are simple: it's a way for crate diggers to save money.

But rather than loading their decks with virtual sides from Bob James and George Clinton, many contemporary producers are using the tools as a way to apply turntable techniques to sounds that would never have been pressed to wax at all. On her debut album *Bashi*, the Leeds based artist Nicole Raymond (aka NikNak) gathers her own audio snapshots – thunder, voices, birds – and drops them onto the turntable (she tells me that she found the deck abandoned in her mum's shed). As the album plays out, the illusion of a specific place, relied on by so many field recording artists, is slowly glitched and warped. Raymond's scratches, loops and rewinds are reminders that this isn't a window into any sonic reality but a spiralling replica.

The luminous pair of albums that Raymond dropped in 2022 – *Sankofa* and *Chasing Solitude* – both felt like trips back to this realm. Titles like "Cave_s Crest" make her tracks feel like they've been lifted from the folders of some forgotten video game. For all their playful futurism, though, these sets feel strangely elegiac. The title *Sankofa* is drawn from an old Ghanaian prayer urging remembrance, and *Chasing Solitude* ends with the distant voices of Rastafari elders scratched into new shapes. When I ask about the influences on this haunted sound, Raymond points back to abstract turntablists (naming Chavez in particular), but also to pioneers of hiphop, such as The Coup's late DJ, Pam The Funkstress.

Speaking to Newcastle based musician (and *Wire* contributor) Mariam Rezaei, I'm led to the same tradition. "The whole point of turntablism is to prove *you're fucking good!*" she laughs. "That comes from hiphop." Watch her perform live, and you find a phenomenal dexterity that's rare in abstract turntablism: an arsenal of scratching and beat-juggling chops that draws on endless teenage hours spent rewinding old VHS tapes of deck battles.

Where competitive DJing can end up slamming into a brick wall of blank technique, though, her sets are charged with sadness, anger and serenity. In some of Rezaei's pieces, the complexity comes from the source material, as she reworks her own compositions on digital decks. Elsewhere, it's more visceral. Released just a few weeks ago, her latest EP *SADTITZZZ* is described as "a requiem for the old guard of turntablism". Like Chavez's work, it's a miracle of subtraction. Rolling back the excesses of earlier DJs, Rezaei scratches a short YouTube sample (a clip of some random guy overblowing his trombone), unfolding a cosmos of fury and joy. This is the sound of a virtuosic improvisor, using her instrument to find the depths within one tiny seed. ☐

Kemi Adejumo

Deborah Walker (left) and Silvia Tarozzi

Two were for her acoustic *Occam* works, both in Paris; the third was a diffusion, by François J Bonnet, of the first section of her *Trilogie De La Mort*, one of her major works for synth, at London's Iklectik. Radigue's compositional method is one of slowly revealing the complexity of simple sounds, turning the space into a vibratory place in which the listeners are, for a duration, joined together.

This sonic witnessing has taken many forms this year: sitting in a Suffolk church with Laura Cannell and fiddling with the organ; relistening to Norma Waterson, who died as the year turned; listening, with new friends, to the shimmering hum of Andrius Arutiunian's Gharib Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. On the small screen, *Station Eleven* was compelling in its insistence on the value of art at the end of the world, *KaDeWe* was, even for a drama set in the last days of the Weimar Republic, hopeful, and Netflix's *The Sandman* took me back. Julia Blackburn's *Time Song: Searching For Doggerland* made me look at land in a different way, and Silvia Tarozzi and Deborah Walker's hymns to their native northern Italy, *Canti Di Guerra, Di Lavoro E D'Amore*, brought joy to me and, I hope, my neighbours.

George Grella

I'm writing this while constantly refreshing Twitter because in this moment it might collapse because a log file on a hard driver somewhere wasn't flushed in time. If Twitter didn't survive to the point when you're reading this, know that I loved it because it was the best place for irreverence and self-stabilising anarchy and chaos.

That last isn't an oxymoron, it's culture. The best things have chaos inside them but necessary limits, the rough edges of life and the unexpected that make the form that hold them better. That's why I watched a ton of horror movies this year, from new-to-me, like *Society*, to brand new, like *Nope* and *Barbarian*. Don't give me rote order, give me the mess and chaos I've been experiencing for four years.

Western music, across the board, has been woefully short of mess and chaos, irreverence about itself. That includes free music, new music, so-called experimental music, and the self-identified avant garde, where irreverence is essential. There is a lot of high quality and almost nothing that doesn't recreate what has been going on now for years, if not decades. This feels political, democracies pushing away fascism, seeking internal comforts? We'll die of comfort, don't let them take away our chaos.

Jason Gross

My biggest concern about the musical ecosphere now is the diminishing prospects for live entertainment. Our (purported) post-Covid era was supposed to bring concerts roaring back but we're seeing price gouging by the major ticketing companies, independent artists who can't afford to tour, other artists still brought down by illness and mental health issues and venues struggling to remain open.

What's needed is a holistic, longterm strategy to bolster live music, but it's not coming from anywhere yet – if you poke around UK organisation websites like the Arts Council, British Council, Musicians' Union and Independent Society of Musicians, you see bits and pieces of helpful ideas (subsidies, grants, health care) but no overarching plan to address this. In the US, the RIAA bigwigs and even the laudable Future of Music Coalition aren't much more helpful.

I'd suggest pop up venues, GoFundMe tours, and paid streaming shows as some ways to fill in the gaps – hell, there's even old school house parties and busking if needs be. But how much better would it be if professional organisations or even non-professional ones actually brainstormed for ways to keep live music alive?

James Gui

The first film I saw in theatres this year was Edward Yang's *Yi Yi* (2000) at Seoul Art Cinema. Back then, more so than now, my Korean language abilities were limited, but since I was rewatching the film and it was mostly in Mandarin, I was able to understand a fair bit of what was going on. Funnily enough, I relied on the Korean subtitles to understand the parts that were in Taiwanese, a dialect mutually unintelligible with the flavour of Chinese I'd grown up with.

Later, in a moment of hubris, I decided to watch Ryusuke Hamaguchi's *Drive My Car* with only Korean subtitles to guide me through. Not knowing any Japanese, my limited Korean abilities which seemed so inflated during my viewing of *Yi Yi* weren't any help either.

This is all to say that this year has changed my relationship to language and knowing. I've become less uncomfortable in the gaps of understanding caused by my limited language abilities. Instead, I've begun to pay attention to what's implied, what's acted out, what's felt, supplementing these with the glimpses of a new world that a foreign language can offer.

Andy Hamilton

This year's releases provoked some further thoughts about the relation of jazz and rock, and how, in the 1950s, rock 'n' roll's straight feel evolved from jazz swing. From the late 60s, these genres collided in the form of jazz rock, most creatively in the work of Tony Williams. His *Play Or Die* from 1980, reissued a few months ago, illustrates the expressive resources that a great jazz drummer found in his explorations into rock, and the tension between these two feels has been a creative one. There can be a give and take of the beat, a breathing elasticity, in both kinds of feel, as heard on my album of the year, Mike Baggetta's *Everywhen We Go*.

An example of what Jelly Roll Morton called the Spanish tinge is the straight feel of Latin – which may be an origin of that feel in rock. I was reminded of the continuing riches of Cuba's piano heritage by David Virelles's latest release, a duo album with his mentor Hilario Durán. A talent deserving wider recognition is Canadian pianist Tania Gill, who this year released the excellent *Disappearing Curiosities*.

My music book of the year is Albert Glinsky's wonderfully readable and informative biography *Switched On: Bob Moog And The Synthesizer Revolution*. My music film of the year is Sacha Jenkins's insightful documentary *Louis Armstrong's Black & Blues*, which hopefully disposes forever of the slur that Armstrong engaged in Uncle Tom subservience.

Miloš Hroch

Experiencing live music has become more important and precious, given health, environmental and economic issues. Covid transformed former safe spaces into 'what if?' spaces: at the back of my mind was a hunch that someone in the room might have 'it'. But Eric Chenaux's September concert at Prague's Punctum made these thoughts disappear like a fog. My attention was fixated on Chenaux's guitar with three or more channels, trying to trace the signal paths to understand how he modified the guitar sound as he played his instrument like a synth. He told anecdotes about dogs or his French countryside neighbours and sang ballads from his gorgeous album *Hey Laura* with a tender, soft voice, and it was one of the most compelling and human performances I saw this year.

On my way home, I started to worry about such independent venues – in Prague and elsewhere – as I passed by the newly built corporate buildings. Not only gentrification but rising energy prices and inflation may bring these places to their knees: they will need our support as the crisis hits harder.

The most radical film I saw was the Afrofuturist musical *Neptune Frost*, co-directed by Saul Williams and Rwandan actor and film maker Anisia Uzeyman. It's a parable with wild imagination about the crypto-colonial circulation of people, materials, devices and data. Reading Bob Stanley's *Let's Do It: The Birth Of Pop* made me think about how the past informs the present, and the book helped me see charts with different eyes. I also

Eric Chenaux's guitar set-up

Eric Chenaux (guitar); Marilena Vlachopoulou (Tarozzi & Walker)

Edwin Pouncey on **Avant Rock**

1. **The Lord † Petra Haden**
   Devotional (Southern Lord)
2. **Blood Incantation**
   Timewave Zero (Century Media)
3. **Deliluh**
   Fault Lines (Tin Angel)
4. **Jeff Cotton**
   The Fantasy Of Reality (Madfish)
5. **Arthur Brown & Rik Patten**
   Long Long Road (Prophecy/Magnetic Eye)
6. **Mat Ball**
   Amplified Guitar (The Garrotte)
7. **Anna Von Hausswolff**
   Live At Montreux Jazz Festival (Pomperipossa)
8. **Snake Chain**
   Snake Chain (Upset The Rhythm)
9. **OFF!**
   Free LSD (Fat Possum)
10. **Rustic Hinge & The Provincial Swimmers**
    Tea On The Lawn For Three (Thylacine/High On The Pygtrack)

Topping this year's heap of wildly varied avant rock releases is *Devotional*, a deeply spiritual set of droned psalms from Sunn O))) guitarist Greg Anderson (aka The Lord) and vocalist/violinist Petra Haden, daughter of bass player Charlie Haden. The combination of Anderson's heavy strumming and Haden's ethereal vocalising, occasionally levitated still higher by her spectral violin, makes this an intoxicating and moving masterwork. Another surprise was the discovery of Toronto art rockers Deliluh, whose *Fault Lines* has now become a firm favourite. Big|Brave guitarist Mat Ball's solo *Amplified Guitar* exhibits his skill as a sculptor of feedback, the passages of silence somehow making his instrument sound louder. *Free LSD*, the latest offering from former Circle Jerks/Black Flag singer Keith Morris's OFF! punk supergroup eventually takes hold. It's a manic mosh-pitted concept album, with UFO sightings thrown in for good measure, that's made even more sonically remarkable by the trio of disjointed sax breaks from Claw Hammer's Jon Wahl.

Equally futuristic are London art school five-piece Snake Chain whose out of body version of post-punk rock is an engrossing thing of ugly beauty. And who could expect a visitation from The God Of Hellfire, Arthur Brown, who, now in his eighties, sounds as dangerous and unpredictable as ever. His *Long Long Road* comeback album with multi-instrumentalist Rik Patten revives his unique take on prog rock and resurrects his adoration of the blues. Also worth hunting down is the double LP from Crazy World Of Arthur Brown offshoot band Rustic Hinge & The Provincial Swimmers, a previously unreleased psychedelic oddity that fans of Captain Beefheart & His Magic Band will immediately tune into. It's eccentric UK 70s avant rock at its finest. ☐

Joe Muggs on **Critical Beats**

1. **QUE DJ & DJ Lag**
   "Where's Your Father?" (Amagogogo Sounds)
2. **Karen KG Nyame**
   "Taboo" (Black Acre)
3. **Lauren Ritter & Tenesha The Wordsmith**
   "Drake & Driving" (Rift Vision)
4. **The Maghreban featuring Nah Eeto**
   "Got Your Number (Boss Mix)" (Zoot)
5. **Shy One**
   "B*tch U Better" (Eglo)
6. **Sje Konka featuring Mandy ZA**
   "Njabulo" (Konka Production)
7. **DJ Katapila**
   "Ebaa Overbo Mix" (Club Yeke)
8. **Ron Trent presents Warm featuring Khruangbin**
   "Flos Potentia (Sugar, Cotton, Tobacco)" (Night Time Stories)
9. **DJ Slimfit**
   "Ahh Freebeat" (Moves)
10. **Ikonika**
    "When You Look At Me" (Hyperdub)

It's been rare amid 21st century information flux for a single trend to dominate, but this year musicians and styles from across Africa absolutely took the lead in club culture.

Two years into the global explosion of South African amapiano, it continues to represent the biggest single shift in dance music tempo and dynamics since dubstep went half-time in the 2000s – amapiano's tantric pulse and huge sub bass have become a core clubland sound from Saigon to Sao Paulo, and inspired established producers from Diplo to Ikonika to explore this new groove.

South Africa's love of house music more broadly fuelled a huge worldwide boom from grassroots to the pinnacle of the mainstream (via Beyoncé and Drake). Artists with West African heritage like Ghanaian Brits Karen KG Nyame and Hagan brought together South African influence and the sophistication of various Afrobeats forms.

But at the same time, young Nigerians from Lagos were rebelling against that very sophistication with the delirious, hilarious rawness of so-called cruise or freebeats productions. All of this created other echoes and resonances, for example strengthening the revivified presence of broken beat as a flavour in the UK underground, and reinforcing the global bass interplay as gqom, grime, techno and other harder styles bounced off one another in the sets of internationalist DJ crews across the world. ☐

Steve Barker on **Dub & Reggae**

1. **Undefined**
   Defined Riddim (Khaliphonic)
2. **Augustus Pablo & Rockers All Stars**
   Lightning & Thunder (Onlyroots)
3. **Horace Andy**
   Midnight Rocker/Midnight Scorchers (On-U Sound)
4. **The Mystic Revelation Of Rastafari**
   Grounation (Soul Jazz)
5. **Om Unit**
   Acid Dub Versions (Om Unit)
6. **Ja-Man Allstars**
   King's Dub (Manzie)
7. **Al Cisneros**
   Sinai Dub Box (2012–2022) (Sinai/Drag City)
8. **The Prophets**
   The Yabby You Sound: Dubs & Versions (Pressure Sounds)
9. **Noda & Wolfers**
   Tascam Space Station (LIES/Nightwind)
10. **Soul Revivers**
    On The Grove/Grove Dub (Acid Jazz)

The selection of top dub/reggae from 2022 mixes the orthodox and the modern with ease, as the creators have a direct link back to the sonics, aesthetics and tradition of the music on which theirs is constructed.

Adrian Sherwood's productions for Horace Andy, the singer who started at Studio One and went on to collaborate with most of Jamaica's greatest producers, have proved astonishingly popular. Portland's ZamZam Sounds provided the portal for Japan's remarkable Undefined for their release on the subsidiary imprint Khaliphonic, an album bridging vintage UK nu-dub and today's more abstract dub extrusions.

A welcome surprise was an album of rare and unreleased material from the late Augustus Pablo, featuring some of his very heaviest cuts. Likewise, Pressure Sounds revisiting the Yabby You catalogue to collate a peerless set of the Jesus Dread's dubs. Jim Coles aka Om Unit did the right thing coming with a sparkling dub set companion to 2021's *Acid Dub Studies* while Japan's Taka Noda (Takafumi aka Mystica Tribe) teamed with Dutch dub pal Danny Wolfers aka Legowelt to conjure up the most fun dub album of the year with their *Tascam Dub Station*, a sound that could easily be mistaken for the work of Disrupt.

King's Dub dubs the riddims found on General Echo's 1979 album *Rocking And Swing*, which was produced by Augustus Pablo's brother Dudley 'Manzie' Swaby, and although repressed before, it returned in a beautiful pressing with the dubs sonically luscious. Al Cisneros has been around for years, best known as part of the stoner rock and doom metal brigades Abestosdeath, OM and Sleep, and his seriously heavy *Sinai Dub Box* documents his developments into more righteous realms over the last ten years. ☐

count among my highlights the fun talks I had with music journalists from Poland, Ukraine and Slovenia, and the good people from *The Wire* I met this year.

Leah Kardos

I've been feeling a bit strange about taking part in the year-end reflections this time around. My father died in January. His name is Ivan Kardos, and he was a rock 'n' roller. He died on the publication day of my first book – *Blackstar Theory: The Last Works Of David Bowie* – which was really about death, so I found that detail to be particularly on the nose, thanks universe.

When I look back on 2022, much of everything that happened since then feels blurry and indistinct, and maybe that's why the live gigs that I recall best happen to be the most intense, like the explosive Sons Of Kemet Roundhouse gig in February that left me vibrating on a weird new frequency for weeks. Similarly life affirming, the sound of Colin Currie Group rattling through Iannis Xenakis's *Pléïades* at the South Bank Centre in October, and Shugorei clattering through a hectic set of demented vibraphone drum 'n' bass at a tiny Brisbane venue in April. Music has been brilliant medicine for the soul and I found a lot of comfort in Alice Cohen's *Moonrising*, an album about her own dead dad – I've been clinging to that record like a life raft.

Joshua Minsoo Kim

During a teachers' conference this past July, I attended a session that was dedicated to thinking about life during quarantine. This single hour granted me the sole opportunity I've had since schools reopened to sit, reflect and converse with others about that time. I was moved to tears on multiple occasions, and felt the weight we all bear to move forward; it looms over my classrooms every day as I talk with my students, many of whom have lower reading and math levels than years past. As always, the only way to press on is through patience.

A lot of the films I enjoyed this year allowed space for necessary contemplation (David Easteal's *The Plains*, James Benning's *The United States Of America*), while the concerts I most enjoyed (Lucy Liyou, Davido) were thrilling because they felt communal, albeit in vastly different ways. With music, I find myself most interested in mapping out musical ideas across different cultures and eras. It's why I was so drawn to Moin's reconfigured post-hardcore, the momentous archival release of Joyce's *Natureza*, or the absurd sonics of baile funk on SoundCloud. If it felt impossible to tackle every day, then encountering ceaseless artistic innovations across history inspired me to keep going.

Biba Kopf

"You want it darker?", asked Leonard Cohen on his last album of the that name, released just before his death in 2016. Just when the year couldn't get much bleaker, what with terrrifying fuel cost rise, the Russia-Ukraine war, Putin's nuclear threat, etc, Laibach's late 2022 revival of Cohen's earlier 1992 song "The Future" was especially timely, its gallows humour nailing it in lines about shoving crack and anal sex up a hole in your culture, and having seen the future, brother, it's murder.

But the late autumn reading of 95 year old US activist/singer Barbara Dane's wonderful autobiography *This Bell Still Rings: My Life Of Defiance And Song* (Heyday Books) completely flipped my upside down smile. From her 1940s youth onwards, the Detroit raised Dane has kept up the good fight against American and worldwide racism and fascism, both at home and abroad in Cuba (she got to meet Fidel Castro), South America, Soviet era Eastern Europe and Vietnam, working across jazz, blues and folk with the likes of Lightnin' Hopkins, The Chambers Brothers, Jesse Fuller, Mikis Theodorakis, Bob Dylan and, late on, Thurston Moore and Jim O'Rourke. Recommended listening: Dane's *I Hate The Capitalist System* and *FTA! Songs Of The GI Resistance* and her Lightnin' Hopkins and Chambers Brothers collaborations.

Steph Kretowicz

Euphoria is an American teen drama featuring a cast of unbelievably attractive adults playing high school students for whom teachers don't exist, drugs are abundant, and sex is recreational rather than a humiliating rite of passage. Full-frontal nudity and the impressive prowess of these fictional teenagers makes this millennial wonder about the show's target audience. More interesting, though, are its fundamental lack of a basic plot, marginal character development and unclear motivations.

The cuts and edits are extreme, the pacing is overwhelming, and the scenography so elaborate an entire episode could be described as one long music video, with some dialogue, if not for its outrageously convoluted soundtrack. You count as many as ten songs in ten minutes – fragments from late 60s Bobby Womack and 50s Judy Garland, early Sinead O'Connor and *Kick*-era INXS, a turn of the millennium Arcade Fire.

There's a contemporary singer-songwriter called ORYL whose terrible cover of The Pixies' "Where Is My Mind" leans into the Auto-Tuned inclinations of other viral hit wonders like xanprincess, goldmonkee, and Laura Les of 100 Gecs. All that's to say that if *Euphoria* were the brain of a Gen Z digital native, it's surely structurally different from its predecessors, or simply swirling in a hyper-referential abyss of all content with no context nostalgia porn.

Dave Mandl

In a year when most of the media and everyone's employer acted as if Covid were gone for good, dozens of people I know finally caught it (me too), though vaccines and boosters meant most cases were just a minor annoyance. Getting on with life remained dicey. With the January Omicron wave I had to cancel three gigs myself, and no one could be certain that any show would actually happen till it happened. Riders on the increasingly crowded New York subway masked up only occasionally.

Museum exhibitions felt less like potential superspreaders than music shows, and one of the best of the year was the once in a lifetime retrospective of photographers Bernd and Hilla Becher at the Metropolitan Museum. Another was the New York, New Music exhibit at the Museum of the City of New York, an

Siavash Amini on music amid protest and civil unrest in Iran

"Walking in a city where sound doesn't give silence a chance". The opposition of an imposing city with that of a tired body is a recurring theme in Roody's lyrics. Released three weeks before the protests erupted in Iran following the September 2022 killing of Mahsa Amini, arrested by Gashte Ershad (Iran's morality police) for not wearing a hijab, the track "Mahi" sounds rather prophetic: *"Grow wings grow wings/Jump out of the fishbowl"*, says the narrator to the weary fish swimming around in the tank. In a track consisting mostly of negative statements about things that a fish isn't or doesn't have, this rare moment of flight is reminiscent of the public attempting to seize their autonomy.

Roody was part of a large group of female and non-binary artists who took over the airwaves of Radio AlHara in September to raise awareness of the protests. A couple of other prominent names included Aida Shirazi and Rojin Sharafi. This was one of the biggest gatherings of underground and independent scenes for a political cause in recent memory. Earlier the Iranian Female Composers Association issued a statement over social media supporting the protests signed by all its members, and many of them joined this two day takeover.

Virtual international support for Iranian protests and artists has been overwhelming, but there has been no effort to mitigate the situation in reality. The global financial systems and governments have mostly shown indifference, and in a few cases, disdain. Because of sanctions, Iranian musicians can't sell their music directly online, nor do they have access to many services that people routinely use globally. Recently underground mainstays Temp-illusion and Roody had to cancel their long planned European tour because their visa applications got rejected by the German government, citing their financial situation and the current uprising in Iran.

This is a disappointing turn of events, considering that since 2019, almost all prominent independent events in Iran went into hiatus, partly because of Covid, but mostly because of financial hardship and the ever tightening grip of censorship by the government. The latter's embargo on the import of musical instruments and gear, along with the falling price of the Iranian rial due to sanctions and government mismanagement of the economy, has caused the cost of music gear to soar. This has made it impossible for independent event organisers to plan anything viable.

This is just what the government is after – making it difficult for independent musicians to survive. Recent arrests of hiphop artists like Veda and the classical singer Mahmoud Mirzaee, among many others, is another manifestation of the government's tendency towards ever-increasing pressure and censorship. The internet shutdown that has been slowly implemented over recent years under the guise of the Sianat (Protection) bill is putting pressure on the online community of independent musicians, leaving one of the most important assets of this community with an uncertain future.

Despite all that, the Iranian independent scene has produced some successful albums this year; Tegh's *Ima* and Aftab Darvishi's *A Thousand Butterflies* to name a few. They are a sign of a thriving albeit small community of artists trying to get through all the limitations they face from many directions.

So far, despite individual efforts, there haven't been any further attempts from independent musicians to organise in support of the protests other than the Radio AlHara takeover. We can only hope that the inspiring situationist strategies of a new generation of protestors and artists will lead to alternative approaches in the near future.

Meanwhile, there's ongoing hope that a more inclusive and radical approach to that of past experiences of organisation in the independent scene will give rise to new possibilities in collective social activism, finally realising the ideal of "woman life freedom". □

Steph Kretowicz on **Electronics**

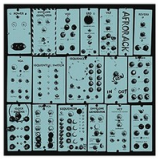
1 **33**
33–69 (CANVAS)
2 **Frederik Valentin & Loke Rahbek**
Together (Posh Isolation)
3 **Lucrecia Dalt**
¡Ay! (RVNG Intl)
4 **Coby Sey**
Conduit (AD 93)
5 **Marina Herlop**
Pripyat (Pan)
6 **Björk**
Fossora (One Little Independent)
7 **TAAHLIAH & Loraine James**
Fuck It! (Untitled Recs)
8 **umru**
Comfort Noise (PC Music)
9 **Himera**
Sharing Secrets (Unseelie)
10 **Claire Rousay & More Eaze**
Never Stop Texting Me (Orange Milk)

Francis Gooding on **Global**

1 **Afrorack**
The Afrorack (Hakuna Kulala)
2 **Biluka Y Los Canibales**
Leaf-Playing In Quito 1960–65 (Honest Jons)
3 **Ustad Noor Bakhsh**
Jingul (Honiunhoni)
4 **Md After Hussain & PAQ**
Songs Of The Earth (Hive Mind)
5 **Phelimuncasi**
Ama Gogela (Nyege Nyege Tapes)
6 ***Lèspri Ka: New Directions In Gwoka Music From Guadeloupe 1981–2010***
Various (Time Capsule)
7 **Noori & His Doorpa Band**
Beja Power! Electric Soul And Brass From Sudan's Red Sea Coast (Ostinato)
8 **Thandi Ntuli**
Blk Elijah & The Children Of Meroë (Ndlela Music)
9 **Lucho Bermudez Y Su Orquesta**
Coastal Invasion: Cumbia, Porro, Gaita And Mapalé From Colombia's Caribbean Coast 1946–1961 (Radio Martiko)
10 ***Padang Moonrise: The Birth Of The Modern Indonesian Recording Industry 1955–1969***
Various (Soundway)

Tim Fish on **Hiphop & R&B**

1 **billy woods x Messiah Musik**
Church (Backwoodz Studioz)
2 **Teddy Faley**
Teddy Brown Brown (WATKK)
3 **ELUCID**
I Told Bessie (Backwoodz Studioz)
4 **Moor Mother**
Jazz Codes (ANTI–)
5 **Fatboi Sharif & noface**
Preaching In Havana (PTP)
6 **Little Simz**
Sometimes I Might Be Introvert (Age 101 Music)
7 **Tom Caruana**
Strange Planet (Tea Sea)
8 **Quelle Chris**
Deathfame (Mello Music Group)
9 **GROUP**
2 (Blah)
10 **Eva Lazarus**
Brandy Kisses (Melonskin)



For all the inconsistent output and lack of a shared thread among artists who've come out of the other end of a collective trauma in 2022, a handful of unique releases surfaced from the many introspective pandemic albums. Those that stand out do so in the oddest and eclectic of ways, from the soft rock abstraction of Frederik Valentin and Loke Rahbek's surprisingly sunny *Together*, to the humid, otherworldly waltz of Lucrecia Dalt's most accessible album to date *¡Ay!*. Not only has the Colombian producer added Spanish language singing to her own tracks but her typically tactile ambient compositions are led by a full band of wind and brass instruments, double bass and percussion.

There is at least one common throughline to music in a chaotic year: a growing tendency to incorporate classical orchestration in an electronic musician's battery. Examples include Billy Bultheel and Alexander Iezzi's gothic techno project 33, featuring Patrick Belaga's cello and opera singer Steve Katona's countertenor; and Eartheater playing a phenomenal live performance with a six-piece ensemble in Los Angeles. Björk's *Fossora* picks up where 2015's *Vulnicura Strings* left off with its lush instrumentation.

Elsewhere, Spanish pop star Rosalía's excellent concept album *Motomami*, produced by Pharrell Williams and El Guincho, features clear echoes of Arca-pioneered post-club music and SOPHIE's bubblegum bass. There's little doubt those styles have firmly made it into a contemporary mainstream where up is down, down is up, and nothing is off limits. ☐

Nyege Nyege Tapes and offshoot Hakuna Kulala are really flooding the zone: it sometimes felt like 2022 was one long succession of baffling mindfucks, exhilarating future shocks and unexpectedly sharp left turns delivered by the Kampala based label. Occult Brazilian industrial electronics? Check. Retrospective of Los Angeles reality rap legends Chillin' Villain Empire? Why not! Off the chain singeli and mutant gqom? Naturally.

Despite occasional off-continent forays, the labels remain sharply focused on (mostly East and South) African digital dance production, and they have an embarrassment of riches to work with. Afrorack, aka Brian Bamanya, whose spiralling, pulsing modular synth opus was a highpoint this year, has said that the next electronic music revolution will happen in Africa. But it seems to already be happening, and Bamanya is in the vanguard.

Meanwhile, the international tours, releases and festival dates that Nyege Nyege are orchestrating are instrumental in pushing radical local sounds far beyond African borders, exposure which is in turn encouraging their creators to ever more turnt acts of sonic daring. Elsewhere, the reissue excavators keep on finding magnificent new-old artefacts: Soundway's smoky overview of Indonesian pop and jazz shows that even now the past holds unknown worlds within worlds, while Honest Jon's *Paths Of Pain* follow-up feature for leaf-whistling visionary Biluka is so beautiful and strange that you cannot believe it is of this world at all. ☐

Narrowing this year down to a simple top ten felt like a fool's errand, as hiphop once again enjoyed another 12 months of stellar releases. Backwoodz Studioz reigned supreme with a faultless run including two impeccable albums from billy woods, the latter of which edged its way into my chart thanks in part to Messiah Musik's perfectly matched production. There were also superb projects from ELUCID, Duncecap, ShrapKnel and AKAI SOLO, whose label debut is one of his strongest albums to date.

The Backwoodz extended family also enjoyed success, as Moor Mother continued to carve out her own jazz-soaked dreamlike niche with *Jazz Codes*, while Fatboi Sharif teamed up with noface to create another body of work that separated itself from virtually every other album on the planet. Quelle Chris brought forth more refreshing sounds with *Deathfame*, Open Mike Eagle melded a nostalgic past with the present on *a tape called component system with the auto reverse*, and Teddy Faley returned with some of the year's best writing on *Teddy Brown Brown*.

In the UK, Little Simz continued her meteoric rise with the release of *Sometimes I Might Be Introvert*. Tom Caruana once more proved himself an unsung hero of the scene with a dazzling combination of production and collaborations, while elsewhere Jehst and Lee Scott carried on their GROUP effort to ascend to the upper echelons with ease. So while hiphop is not still without its faults, both within the industry and the culture as a whole, it does also feel as though there has never been a better time to thrive as a DIY artist or independent label. And long may it continue. ☐

Širom

in-depth look at NYC in the extraordinarily fertile early 80s, when hiphop, post-punk, no wave and the avant garde almost melded into one big scene. Among the post-pandemic green shoots here in Brooklyn were an outstanding new independent bookstore (brazenly defying astronomical rents as well as Amazon) and Shift, a new venue that packed in fans of improvised and experimental music pretty much every night.

Personally, I was coaxed out of a hiatus at WFMU to start doing a weekly radio show again: *It's Complicated*, focusing on music in unusual time signatures. At the same time, restrictions on live guests in the FMU studios began to be lifted, cautiously. Fingers crossed.

Peter Margasak

I moved to Berlin during the summer of 2019, a few months before the shut down. This past summer was the first time I could fully take advantage of the panoply of festivals on the continent. Still, the exhaustion was worth it when I think of the most sublime performances I was able to witness, whether Borderlands Trio casting a shape-shifting spell at Jazz Em Agosto in Lisbon, Gard Nilssen's Supersonic Orchestra's joyfully raucous sense of community and propulsion in Saalfelden, or Silvia Tarozzi and Deborah Walker's sui generis Italian folk project freezing time and place within the cozy confines of Ausland here in Berlin.

Of course, the world is totally fucked, but live music offered a reliable salve and a reminder of humanity at its best. Best book about music? Kate Molleson's generous, beautiful *Sound Within Sound*. At home, the addiction I've developed for drowning within the sustained tones of various experimental microtonal musics has carried on unabated (Cat Lamb, Éliane Radigue, The International Nothing, Greg Davis, Michiko Ogawa, Jan Martin Smørdal et al).

Ryan Meehan

As the year-end conversation gets underway, there's a conspiracy of silence around David Cronenberg's *Crimes Of The Future* – a movie which puts all of his powers of invention, attraction and revulsion to work in a troubled, ironic vision that only grows more ambiguous as it develops. Surgery is the new sex, sure, but like cinema, they're both only buying us time before the next phase of (cinematic?) evolution.

On the subject of late style, a standout concert among many for me this year came in under the wire from my favourite greying avant garde MOR-ists (or is it the other way around?) Thom Yorke and Johnny Greenwood's new band The Smile, with Sons Of Kemet drummer Tom Skinner, releasing an album every bit as dynamic as latter-day Radiohead. At New York's Kings Theater in November, they previewed what sounds like a very rich, very weird, near-album's worth of new material.

The book I'm recommending everyone this year is Fred Turner's *The Democratic Surround*, an intellectual history of late 20th century America's evolving techno-civics, from MoMA to the Human Be-In by way of John Cage.

Bill Meyer

Right after I wrote last year that things were getting a little more normal, Omicron shut down Chicago music for another couple of months. I've made up for lost time as far as concert attendance goes, taking particular pleasure in seeing local improvisors in small, mostly uncrowded venues. In every other respect, I've kept my head down: no movies, little travel and Gina Litherland's comfortingly hallucinatory Braids Of The Past at Corbett Vs Dempsey was the only art exhibit that I attended.

The sounds of strings and reeds dominated my listening. The totally improvised music of Pelt's long-awaited return to stage and vinyl, and John Butcher's five LPs for Ni Vu Ni Connu, were not just musically magnificent, they modelled the sort of laser focus on the now that gets one through the intrusive, disturbing recent pasts and looming futures we have had to live with this year. Daniel Bachman's *Almanac Behind* reflected not just the climate grief that we seem to be expected to suck up as fossil fuel purveyors twist the taps open and shut, but also the chaos of this time.

John Morrison

I spent much of 2022 consuming and exploring things that fleshed out my understanding of the things that I enjoyed as a kid. In many ways, my work as a writer, DJ and music maker has acted as a tool for extending my childhood. As a kid, I made tapes, wrote reviews for zines and collected records. Today, much of the music, books and films that intrigue me have some kind of aesthetic, historical and/or cultural connection to the past.

2022 gave us John Klass's fantastic book *Breaks In The Air: The Birth Of Rap Radio In New York City*, an 80s broadcasting revolution that I also witnessed firsthand growing up in Philadelphia. *Record Safari: Digging In The Crates Of America* was a film that I spent a lot of time with this year. It follows Alex Rodriguez as he travels the country, chatting with folks about their record collections. The warmth and twin feelings of familiarity and discovery that these conversations evoked have acted as a pleasant reminder of why I've spent so much of my life giving my all to music.

Joe Muggs

It doesn't get much better than dancing to the Boko! Boko! trio of DJs of variously Nigerian, Caribbean, Indian and white British backgrounds spinning apocalyptic South African gqom and Brazilian grime to an internationalist crowd in Oslo. It was dark, delirious but hopeful – a reminder of the living, vivid pluralism that conservative and totalitarian forces despise.

Other spacetime ruptures for me in 2022 came through a camera held way too close up in a tired Thelonious Monk's face in the deeply odd film *Rewind And Play*, and spending serious time down rabbit holes with the catalogues of RVNG Intl and 4Hero – two entities who have over decades built their own unique subcultures from the materials they find around them.

A Joni Mitchell obsession intensified, especially seeing ESKA interpret her songs and getting rock history rewired reading Sheila Weller's 2009 *Girls Like Us* about Mitchell, Carole King and Carly Simon. More subcultural mapping came through Dave Swindells's *Acid House As It Happened* photobook, Kevin Foakes's *Wheels Of Light* history of psychedelic lighting, and Harry Harrison's *Dreaming In Yellow: The Story Of DiY Sound System*. Each one felt like a synapse thickening in the collective mind.

Louis Pattison

There were two 2022 albums I returned to compulsively this year: *Summer At Land's End* by The Reds, Pinks And Purples and *Dodging Dues* by Garcia Peoples. The first was a melancholy update of 1980s jangle from San Francisco's Glenn Donaldson, also of Skygreen Leopards; the latter, a superpowered jam band from New Jersey channelling psychotropic head music from The Grateful Dead to The Meat Puppets.

Other musical standouts: Chat Pile's sludge-soaked cry of protest "Why"; *Almanac Behind*, a timely document of climate change by the American Primitive guitarist Daniel Bachman, Braxe + Falcon's divine French Touch throwback "Step By Step", featuring Panda Bear; Aleksi Perälä's neverending stream of Colundi techno goodness; and a string of singles from Russ Millions that took UK drill and put a spring in its step.

Reading: *England On Fire: A Visual Journey Through Albion's Psychic Landscape* and *The Cosmic Dance*, two fantastic books compiled by 'image alchemist' Stephen Ellcock. Live: Birmingham's Supersonic Festival, particularly the cathartic no wave of Big|Brave and Nada Sound Ceremony, a deep listening collaboration between DO.OMYOGA and NYX Electronic Drone Choir that made sitting in a converted warehouse by a canal in Digbeth on a Sunday morning feel like a positively transformative experience.

Antonio Poscic

Despite touring becoming increasingly difficult, the 2022 concert season was as invigorating as finding an oasis after days spent wandering through a torrid desert. Still, the three gigs that left a lasting mark were not grandiose productions but intimate communal gatherings which fused esoteric, subtly nostalgic folk with avant practices. In April, I was mesmerized by 75 Dollar Bill's Che Chen, Rick Brown and Andrew Lafkas constructing riveting narratives from bareboned roots music and a minimalist set-up at the Močvara club in Zagreb.

A month later, Širom performed in a carnival tent planted in the venue's garden. While I had seen the Slovenian trio before, this performance was particularly intoxicating as Ana Kravanja, Iztok Koren and Samo Kutin used their whole bodies to expand cuts from the latest album into rituals of earthy, improvised folk.

O Yama O at the ZEZ Festival a week later were similarly hypnotic. I was left in awe by the meticulously organised entropy of Rie Nakajima's found object orchestra, Keiko Yamamoto's wistful but humorous singing, Billy Steiger's playful violin and Marie Roux's steady percussion. It felt like witnessing a folk tale being imagined and embedded in our collective memory.

Edwin Pouncey

The release of Albert Ayler's complete Fondation Maeght recordings earlier this year coincided with the publication of two English language books about the man and his music, the most notable of these being Richard Koloda's *Holy Ghost* biography where Ayler's troubled life and

Courtesy Širom

Andy Hamilton on **Jazz & Improv**

1 **Mike Baggetta/Jim Keltner/Mike Watt**
Everywhen We Go (Big Ego)
2 **Marta Warelis**
A Grain Of Earth (Relative Pitch)
3 **Great Waitress**
back, before (Splitrec)
4 **Sloth Racket**
Organising Space (Luminous)
5 **Tania Gill**
Disappearing Curiosities (Tania Gill)
6 **Robbie Lee & Mary Halvorson**
Seed Triangular (New Amsterdam)
7 **Liz Allbee**
Rille (Relative Pitch)
8 **Playfield**
Stepping Out Vol 1 (577 Records)
9 **Kristo Rodževski**
Fair Weather Friends (Port Of Entry)
10 **Randal Despommier**
A Midsummer Odyssey (Sunnyside)

Music is a life-giving resource in dark times. This was true of the jazz and improv albums and gigs that caught my attention in 2022, and particularly my album of the year, Mike Baggetta's *Everywhen We Go*, with Jim Keltner and Mike Watt. I've known Baggetta for some years, but mostly as a free improvisor. So his new album caught me unprepared – drawing on avant rock and jazz, with quicksilver changes of feel and fecund invention in all areas.

That album also reminded me of how stylistic barriers continue to fall – in the area of rhythm, for instance, between straight and swing feel, or groove and tumbling momentum. More fundamentally, Chris Ballantine at Amsterdam's Rhythm Changes conference gave the most incisive critique of the term jazz I've yet heard. He argued that the group of so-called legacy practitioners is too amorphous – South African jazz, for instance, is too tenuously connected to its alleged American model. Concepts, like more tangible things, get worn out, and maybe jazz's time is coming.

Perhaps a relic of lockdown, the efflorescence of solo improv this year was notable. Several excellent examples are found on the Relative Pitch label, notably Marta Warelis's *A Grain Of Earth*, Liz Allbee's *Rille* and Jon Lipscomb's *Conscious Without Function*. It's a curious thing, but I guess the renaissance of the LP medium has given new life to record labels. Mosaic's state of the art archival productions continue to appear, and one of the most precious was this year's *Lennie Tristano – Personal Recordings 1946–1970*. ☐

Julian Cowley on **Modern Composition**

1 **Oren Ambarchi**
Shebang (Drag City)
2 **Caroline Shaw**
Evergreen (Nonesuch)
3 **Mark Ellestad**
Discreet Angel (Another Timbre)
4 **Magnus Granberg**
How Lonely Sits The City? (Another Timbre)
5 **Brian Harnetty**
Words And Silences (Winesap)
6 **John Luther Adams**
Houses Of The Wind (Cold Blue)
7 **Cheryl E Leonard**
Antarctica: Music From The Ice (Other Minds)
8 **Malcolm Goldstein**
Because A Circle Is Not Enough (New World)
9 **Allison Cameron**
Somatic Refrain (Another Timbre)
10 **Claire Rousay**
Everything Perfect Is Already Here (Shelter Press)

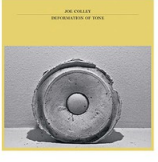
We find ourselves living in an age of anxiety, with music a vital source of solace and support. Present day composers exist within a climate of global uncertainty and, whether or not they choose explicitly to address that situation, their music will be heard within its context.

Cheryl Leonard's visit to the Antarctic Peninsula has resulted in compositions of fragile beauty, incorporating field recordings along with music produced from shells, rocks and penguin bones. Environmental sounds gathered during trips to the far North provided John Luther Adams with material for an electroacoustic composition that conveys vividly the elemental nature of that region, and its precariousness. Numerous musicians have recently shown an interest in the writings of Henry David Thoreau, whose ecological insights and commitment to passive resistance increasingly seem to chime with our time. Now Brian Harnetty has made moving and stimulating use of the recorded voice of Thomas Merton, a monk and social activist whose lucid insights and compassion speak eloquently even to listeners who don't share his religious faith.

Other composers have chosen to foreground values grounded in forms of intimacy, physical activity and meaningful relationship with the practices of everyday life: Mark Ellestad, Malcolm Goldstein and Claire Rousay nurture such values in their own quite different and distinctive ways. In contrast to the brittleness of Marcus Granberg's haunting music, which evokes the desolate aftermath of war, Caroline Shaw's *Evergreen* and Oren Ambarchi's *Shebang* are fully charged with the kind of affirmative energy and creative vigour required to embrace the future. ☐

Jim Haynes on **Noise, Industrial & Beyond**

1 **Joe Colley**
Deformation Of Tone (Total Black)
2 **Vasculae**
Broken Lust (Monorail Trespassing)
3 **Amateur Hour**
Krökta Tankar Och Brända Vanor (Appetite)
4 **Cleared**
Of Endless Light (Touch)
5 **Lawrence English**
Approach (Room40)
6 **Thought Broadcast**
Swarm Structure (Total Black)
7 **Perverts In White Shirts**
Meaning What Exactly? (Misanthropic Agenda)
8 **Moonbeam Terror**
Overwhelming Alive (Summer Interlude)
9 **Hands To**
Bio Electric (New Forces)
10 **Himukalt**
A Third Fantasy (Found Remains)



The pandemic era may be coming to an end, and with that lurching crawl back towards human congregation, performance has returned in a live context. But I have to wonder why there were not as many great works of brutalist noise as the day and age required. Thankfully, Joe Colley and Jon Borges did not succumb to the curse of aesthetic and/or conceptual vacuity. These two presented dynamic, controlled ignitions of electrical volatility, with Borges (recording under his Vasculae moniker) coldly examining the aftermath of self-inflicted violence, where Colley's meditation on emptiness comes with a shrug at the absurdity of the human condition.

As contemplative counterpoints, Lawrence English produced one of his finest works of isolationist composition, and Cleared entranced with clouds of cymbal dissonance and organic dronescaping. Amateur Hour's what the fuck noise-not-pop remains sweet to these ears: hypnotic, almost psychic deconstructions of Swell Maps at their most exploratory.

Thought Broadcast returns to his fetishized grey-noise strategies. The duo of Dave Phillips and Nathalie Dreier as Perverts In White Shirts slowly churn their Coil-inspired dread electronics with a torpor of perpetual anxiety – Bryan Lewis Saunders's guest appearance making *Meaning What Exactly?* all the more strange. Moonbeam Terror remains a monstrous, uncanny force of consistently chaotic and unpredictable noise, with *Overwhelming Alive* being one of her strongest to date. And the archival Hands To box of crude electronics provided insight into that particular facet to Jeph Jerman's catalogue of wracked body recordings on mangled tape. ☐

revolutionary work are discussed in detail. Koloda's research also dispels the myth surrounding his mysterious death, as well as revealing that bassist Gary Peacock (who, along with drummer Sunny Murray, played on the saxophonist's ESP-Disk' sessions) decided to work alongside Ayler rather than join Miles Davis's group.

Other immersive 2022 reads include *Sun Ra: Art On Saturn*, a huge illustrated volume packed with photos of rare LP covers, labels and other ephemera connected to Sun Ra's Saturn label; and Rebecca Binns's definitive overview on the life and work of Gee Vaucher, the artist who supplied UK anarcho-punk group Crass with their distinctive cover art.

Personal film of the year is *What You Could Not Visualise*, independent film maker Marco Porsia's ingeniously collaged portrait of obscure early post-punk group Rema Rema. Hot summer gigs included Sunn O))) Shoshin duo and Kali Malone at Fabric, together with Blood Incantation and The Bouchard Brothers, both at Camden's Underworld.

Mosi Reeves

The year brought an unexpected and partially unfamiliar delight: the joy of reading. No, not the textual internet ephemera that I usually navigate, but actual print books. I consumed new work like Dan Charnas's mostly great *Dilla Time* (which I reviewed for this magazine), Lance Scott Walker's moving *DJ Screw: A Life In Slow Revolution*, and Shanté Paradigm Smalls's illuminating *Hip-Hop Heresies: Queer Aesthetics In New York City*.

I devoured recent histories like Kathy Iandoli's uneven but fascinating *God Save The Queens: The Essential History Of Women In Hip-Hop* and Clover Hope's erudite profiles in *The Motherlode: 100+ Women Who Made Hip-Hop*. These tomes arrive as rap fans attempt to finally shift from a yawning gap between 'old heads' faithful to the four elements and a new generation more interested in vibes, to an understanding that, yes, the past informs the present.

Still, old-schoolers too often find more common ground with 'conscious' lyricists like Kendrick Lamar and J Cole than innovative melodicists like Future and Young Thug. Meanwhile, Gen-Z kids rarely venture further back than the late 90s and the heyday of No Limit and Cash Money. The authors I read this year took pride in digging deep and drawing cult stories to the surface. Meanwhile, a broad view of a genre atomised and cleaved over five decades remains tantalisingly out of focus.

Tony Rettman

Much like the year that proceeded it, 2022 heaved a multitude of health issues my way that took priority over keeping current on music, but I dug the debut LPs by avant garage rockers Tha Retail Simps and Washington, DC punk deity Alec MacKaye's latest unit Hammered Hulls. The unearthed home recordings of Charles Stepney released under the title *Step On Step* brought some fuzzy warmth to the gloom while the reissue of the double album by New Zealand drone ensemble Surface Of The Earth provided a fine soundtrack for back porch stargazing.

Louis CK's film *Fourth Of July*, the final season of *Atlanta* and Zayd Ayers Dohrn's riveting podcast series *Mother Country Radicals* were some of the non-musical highlights of 2022, as was Elvis Mitchell's documentary, *Is That Black Enough For You*?. And when a chuckle was needed to get through the day, the stand-up comedy specials of Robert Kelly, Tim Dillon and Joe List delivered in spades.

Mariam Rezaei

Getting back on the road, in and out of the UK, has been incredible in 2022. Anxiety has tried to get the better of me on a number of occasions, but I powered through. I've ventured from city to city, felt the pain of the UK pound's low exchange rate, and the massive highs of festival PAs blasting epic tunes.

I got to play some cool spaces and meet lush audiences, to switch off, settle into the moment and really enjoy live music. At LCMF 2022, solo performances by Pat Thomas, Elaine Mitchener and Roscoe Mitchell were show-stopping, leaving audiences gobsmacked. At Skanu Mezs in Lativa, [Ahmed] had a 1000 strong audience dancing to their mystical free jazz before clipping came onstage and rinsed out the subs.

At Festival Metéo in France, Oren Ambarchi, Johan Berthling and Andreas Werliin's beautiful *Ghosted* project premiered to an appreciative summer audience. Back on home turf, Tusk Music hosted a new Tusk North festival, where we heard the beautiful composition of Supriya Nagarajan, the wild free techno of Kenosist and Edward George blasting his Strangeness Of Dub project through the dusty balconies of the glorious Lit and Phil Library. Iceboy Violet, Jennifer Walton, Klein, Divide & Dissolve, MC Yallah, Yeah You, Penance Stare, Bohman Brothers and Petronn Sphene are just some of the artists that have graced our Geordie stages, kicking up a superb fucking racket each time.

Ilia Rogatchevski

I found myself reading more than usual this year. Some of the titles that came my way were: *The Sound Of Being Human* by Jude Rogers; *Re-Sisters* by Cosey Fanni Tutti; *Listening After Nature* by Mark Peter Wright; and *Bodies* by Ian Winwood. Cornelia Parker's Tate retrospective also made a huge impression on me.

In February, I travelled abroad for the first time in over two years, visiting Vilnius on a *Wire* assignment. I got to interview members of the avant rock group Ir Visa Tai Kas Yra Gražu Yra Gražu, who told me about life in Lithuania during the Soviet era. I'm looking forward to sharing the article in the new year. I also dove back into seeing live music. Highlights included Coventry's Deliaphonic Festival, Letchworth's Wilbury Radio all-dayer and, of course, Supernormal, where I co-facilitated a couple of child-friendly Bang Bang Drum School workshops.

My own creative practice got some love, too. A soundtrack project I've been working on with my partner since 2019 – under the Mute Frequencies alias – was finally completed. We held a screening at London's Divfuse gallery in the summer and are now looking for a label to release the scores.

Dave Segal

2022 was rough. Some favourite musicians died – Pharoah Sanders, Gal Costa, Vangelis, Ian McDonald – but more painful was the passing of my friend and DJ partner Norm Chambers, who succumbed to cancer, aged 50. Better

Maya Baklanova on music making amid the bombardment in Ukraine's capital Kyiv

I started this article on the day Russia launched 100 missiles into Ukraine. During the shelling I sat in a windowless corridor on the floor working on my barely charged laptop as the consequence of electricity withdrawal. It's now been 24 hours since I hadn't had any power in my household.

Russia has been attempting to destroy Ukraine's vital infrastructure, and as of mid-November half of it has gone. Blackouts became the cherry on the top after all the suffering caused by the Russia's invasion. People who stayed and overcame all obstacles that war brought are facing a new wave of challenges.

And despite all of this, they continue to work and create. The sound of generators intertwining with the sound of air-raid sirens, periodic explosions, usual city sounds and the dead silence during the curfew is the sound of Kyiv today. Odesa musician Emil Asadov, who is living in Kyiv at the moment, says, "You have to adjust your day around the power outage schedule. Sometimes the electricity gets turned off not on schedule and it's the worst, because you have to decide what to do with the time you have while waiting for the electricity to come back. But when you get to work you don't procrastinate much, because you start to appreciate every minute spent with electricity on, which makes you much more productive".

The amount of music that Ukrainian labels and musicians are producing is truly impressive. It's all a result of reflection on the war. "You don't spend too much time asking yourself why should I do one thing or another – you just have the motivation to do it, since tomorrow is not guaranteed," says Yuriy Shevchenko also known as NEONKNIGHT.

Some reflect on the events and the world through themselves, like the musicians' trio of Acid Jordan, Tofudj and B SW, who started to write music together in the west of the country when Kyiv Oblast was occupied. The result was the *Considered* album in October as a band called All Options.

Others are creating bellicose protest music related to this bloody war. For example, Kyiv artist Tucha released the popular track "Russia Is A Terrorist State". In the song "Voiyn" ("Warrior"), produced by well-known Ukrainian musician Koloah, the singer repeats, *"Warrior, you are made of steel and will"*, as if she's motivating every Ukrainian to fight. She is also active on the cultural front via YouTube.

"One in the field is a warrior," is the Ukrainian motto, which is why everyone is fighting where they are the most useful. Artists and labels are donating proceeds from their activities to the army. The ones who stayed in Ukraine don't have many opportunities to make money through music and performing. Others, meanwhile, went on to fight in the war, Raavel and John Object among them.

The physical isolation, the imposition of martial laws in Ukraine prohibiting men aged 18–60 from travelling abroad, along with the declining number of foreign artists visiting Ukraine for obvious reasons, have resulted in a weakening of the impact of techno music. Taras Clasps, a musician and content manager of the local radio station Gasoline, tells me that British broken beat music is driving away the "direct and repetitive" German dance music. He jokes that this is our scene avenging Germany for its lack of support in the beginning of the war. Parties with British-style bass music are now popular in Ukraine's capital.

The war and centuries of Russian colonialism have forced every Ukrainian to dive deep into their own history and rethink it. The result is a new Ukrainian culture that has matured and blossomed in the darkest times. As president Volodymyr Zelensky said: "Life will win over death, and light will win over darkness." □

Emily Bick on **Books, Films & Events**

On Site

1. **People Like Us** ***Gone, Gone Beyond*** (Barbican, London, UK)
2. **Alison Knowles** ***Alison Knowles By Alison Knowles: A Retrospective (1960–1922)*** (Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, US)
3. **Laurie Anderson** ***The Weather*** (Hirshhorn Museum, Washington DC, US)
4. **Jerry Hunt** ***Transmissions From The Pleroma*** (Blank Forms, New York, US)
5. **Eric Baudelaire & Alvin Curran** ***When There Is No More Music To Write*** (Spike Island, Bristol, UK)
6. **Hannah Catherine Jones** ***OWED TO CHIRON (The Wounded Healer)*** (Mimosa House, London, UK)
7. **Trevor Mathison** ***From Signal To Decay: Volume 1*** (Goldsmiths CCA, London, UK)
8. **Chuquimamani-Condori & Joshua Chuquimia Crampton** ***Amaru's Tongue: Daughter*** (Auto Italia South East, London, UK)
9. ***Spazio Per Azioni Luminescenti*** (Het Hem, Zaandam, The Netherlands)
10. **TEGH & BAW** ***SINK_VESSEL*** (Beaconsfield Gallery, London, UK)

On Location

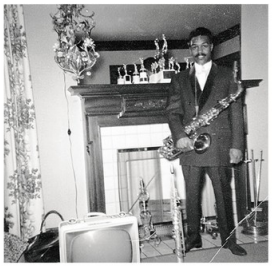
1. **Supernormal** (Brazier's Park, Oxfordshire, UK)
2. **Meakusma** (Various venues, Eupen, Belgium)
3. **London Contemporary Music Festival** (Woolwich Fireworks Factory, London, UK)
4. **Sonic Protest** (L'Échangeur, Paris, France)
5. **AMM** (Cafe Oto, London, UK)
6. **Grimalkin Music Fest 2022** (Fallout, Richmond, US/Bandcamp)
7. **EP/64: The Grand Finale** (Arnolfini, Bristol UK)
8. **A L'Écoute D'Éliane Radigue** (Iklectik, London, UK)
9. **Burning Ambulance Festival** (Bandcamp)
10. **Tectonics** (City Halls, Glasgow, UK)

Print Run

1. ***Spirits Rejoice! Albert Ayler And His Message*** Peter Niklas Wilson, Jane White (Translator) (Wolke Verlag)
2. ***Dilla Time: The Life And Afterlife Of J Dilla, The Hip-Hop Producer Who Reinvented Rhythm*** Dan Charnas (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)
3. ***Blackstar Theory: The Last Works Of David Bowie*** Leah Kardos (Bloomsbury Academic)
4. ***Quantum Listening*** Pauline Oliveros (Ingot)
5. ***Free Music Production, FMP: The Living Music*** Markus Müller (Editors) (Wolke)
6. ***Alien Listening: Voyager's Golden Record And Music From Earth*** Daniel K L Chua & Alexander Rehding (Zone)
7. ***Dreaming In Yellow: The Story Of The DiY Soundsystem*** Harry Harrison (Velocity Press)
8. ***Ugly Beauty: Jazz In The 21st Century*** Phil Freeman (Zero)
9. ***Sound Experiments: The Music Of The AACM*** Paul Steinbeck (University Of Chicago Press)
10. ***The Cricket: Black Music In Evolution 1968–69*** Amiri Baraka, AB Spellman, Larry Neal (Editors) (Blank Forms)

On Screen

1. ***Neptune Frost*** Anisia Uzeyman & Saul Williams (Directors)
2. ***God Said Give 'Em Drum Machines*** Kristian R Hill (Director)
3. ***In The Court Of The Crimson King: King Crimson At 50*** Toby Amies (Director)
4. ***Care*** Klein (Director)
5. ***Imitation: Inversion*** Caroline Kraabel (Director)
6. ***Other, Like Me*** Marcus Werner Hed & Dan Fox (Directors)
7. ***23rd Century Giants: The Story Of Renaldo & The Loaf*** Alex Wroten (Director)
8. ***This Is Gwar*** Scott Barber (Director)
9. ***Buganda Royal Music Revival*** Basile Koechlin & Jules Louis Koechlin (Directors)
10. ***When There Is No More Music To Write, And Other Roman Stories*** Éric Baudelaire (Director)



Joanna Higgs (Supernormal); Edward Ayler; Chris Schwagga (Neptune Frost)

This round-up of arts, book, film and live review charts for the year covers items reviewed in issues of *The Wire* between January and December 2022, so given publication schedules, some things covered took place in the last few months of 2021, but it's safe to say some trends and themes persisted.

Live, several international festivals came back with a vengeance, often rebooking artists whose concerts had been cancelled in the past few years, and then, like Meakusma, expanding their bills an extra day or so. The UK Home Office's hostile environment policies, especially post-Brexit, have also made it harder for many international musicians to tour the UK, which has made European festivals more accessible to them. Still, UK festivals like LCMF and Tectonics punch above their weight with creative programming across genres. Oxford's Supernormal was a standout for sure, with stages populated by the weirdest practitioners of the UK underground before enthusiastic crowds camping in 35 degree heat. Who knows whether this resurgence will last, given rising rents, global inflation and outrageous energy costs that are choking live music and the touring industry – and that's not even taking lingering Covid into consideration. But at least the lessons learned during the deepest part of the pandemic, about how to make streaming interesting, have stuck. Even now that things are supposedly back to normal, a good chunk of 'live' events reviewed over the past year were actually online. Look to Richmond, Virginia label Grimalkin's festival, streamed around the world, for how it's done.

In galleries, Vicki Bennett's *Gone, Gone Beyond* set the end of last year ablaze with its panoramic, all-encompassing, cinematic and musical overload, and continued to tour. But the new year was one for making up for lost time, and rewarding overlooked achievement. Composer, sound designer and founder member of Black Audio Film Collective Trevor Mathison had his first ever show this year, playing the building at London Goldsmith's CCA, while large-scale retrospectives of MEV pioneer Alvin Curran and Fluxus innovator Alison Knowles saw them finally given their due.

There was a similar tendency in this year's crop of music books. After years without a substantive biography of Albert Ayler, two came along at once: a translation of Peter Niklas Wilson's 1996 book, and later, Richard Koloda's *Holy Ghost*. Reappraisals of the AACM, FMP/Free Music Production, and the underground arts publication *The Cricket* put these pioneering creators and chroniclers of free jazz back in the spotlight. There were also examinations of artists who have become more influential after their deaths: J Dilla and his genius as a producer, as well as his longstanding influence on how time operates in hiphop, and David Bowie's late career renaissance.

Finally, when it came to films, a series of documentaries ranging from the intimate (*In The Court Of The Crimson King*) to the ridiculous, with a feuding, comic book cast of thousands (*This Is Gwar*) looked inside the workings of rock ensembles. *God Said Give 'Em Drum Machines*, about Detroit pioneers The Techno Six, put their achievements into an underdiscussed materialist and technological context. But films veering into the fantastic really shone. From the domestic fairytale of Klein's *Care* to the otherdimensional cybernetic visions of Anisia Uzeyman and Saul Williams's brilliant *Neptune Frost*, both demonstrated how music can be the starting point to imagine entirely new worlds. □

known as Panabrite and Jürgen Müller, he was one of America's greatest and most under-recognised experimental ambient musicians. This grimness was countered by several amazing gigs, including bucket-list shows by Grace Jones, Zamrock greats Witch and Kiwi pop giants The Chills. Kikagaku Moyo's triumphant farewell tour date in Seattle had the air of Beatlemania – incredible for an underground Japanese psych rock group. Relative newcomers Snapped Ankles and Kamikaze Palm Tree brought a unique weirdness to the stage, reviving my flagging faith in modern rock.

As for books, I fortuitously consumed Jim Ruland's *Corporate Rock Sucks* and Bruce Adams's *You're With Stupid* consecutively; both document the inner workings of two iconic American record labels, SST and Kranky respectively, and their vastly different fates. No music-centric film hit me harder than the kaleidoscopic David Bowie homage *Moonage Daydream*, in which director Brett Morgen conceived perhaps the most passionate cinematic love letter to an artist ever. A life-enhancing work, even though it ignored Iggy Pop, the pre-glam era, *Young Americans* and cocaine.

Stewart Smith

More than anything, 2022 has been about plugging back into live music. Recent highlights include the righteous sludge of Divide & Dissolve, a dream bill of Henry Threadgill and Anthony Braxton, Xhosa Cole chopping up beats over Hamid Drake grooves, and a deliciously spooky Halloween gig from Bob Dylan. Most live action, however, was focused on festivals, kicking off with Newcastle's Tusk North in March. The return of Glasgow's Counterflows and Tectonics in the spring provided some revelatory music – [Ahmed], Petronn Sphene, Kaja Draksler and Susana Santos Silva, Cassandra Miller and Silvia Tarozzi – and an opportunity to reconnect with an international community of weirdos. Summer adventures at Moers, Tusk x Yeah You and London Contemporary Music Festival (Roscoe Mitchell, Mariam Rezaei, Pat Thomas, Elvin Brandhi and Elaine Mitchener were outstanding at the latter) were followed by Newcastle Festival of Jazz and Improvised Music, where Nicole Mitchell spun magic from flute and phone apps. In these grim times, maintaining inclusive and economically viable underground music communities is no easy task, but persevere we must.

Rosie Esther Solomon

Watching Matana Roberts play live was like getting a glimpse into another dimension. It's a feat of architecture just as much as songwriting; it felt like the world I glimpsed for that hour had no beginning and no end. It was a complete structure, a perfect sphere with an infinite number of possible entries.

I first listened to Roberts's music out of order, starting with the most recent of her ambitious 12 cycle project, *Coin Coin Chapter Four: Memphis*. I soon dove back in time and discovered the moments I loved from that release had the groundwork laid for them previously. Piecing this work together has undoubtedly been a highlight of my year, and I cannot wait to hear *Chapter Five*. I loved watching Blood Incantation successfully cross over to synth ambience on *Timewave Zero*. Cécile McLorin Salvant did the impossible and released a Kate Bush cover to rival the original (as well as the hypnotic "I Lost My Mind" from the same album). *Storyland* by Amy Jeffs has become one of my most treasured possessions, both storytelling and illustration. *Hollow* by B Catling was also unlike anything I've ever read before or since.

Daniel Spicer

Fantastic to get to festivals again this year and witness amazing music from artists both known and unknown to me: [Ahmed], Sunik Kim and Jana Rush at Counterflows; MC Yallah, Jooklo Duo and The Shits at Supernormal; William Parker, Hamid Drake and Anja Lauvdal at Kongsberg Jazz Festival; and, at the London Jazz Festival, Anthony Braxton and Henry Threadgill plus a Don Cherry tribute by Kahil El'Zabar's Ethnic Heritage Ensemble with Neneh Cherry channelling the poetry of Jayne Cortez. Pure fire! Good vibes at The Outer Church at Brighton's Rose Hill, for *The Wire*'s 40th birthday celebrations, with Kemper Norton, Opal X and others, and me called in at the last minute to read some poems. A fine day out.

Blown away by the amount of exciting new cinema this year: the paranoid sci-fi comedy *Something In The Dirt*; Saul Williams and Anisia Uzeyman's sumptuous Afrofuturist poem *Neptune Frost*; Mark Jenkin's surreal Cornish folk-horror *Enys Men*; and the deliriously prolonged spectacle of the obscenely rich rolling around in their own shit and vomit in Ruben Östlund's *Triangle Of Sadness* had me laughing almost as much as Nicholas Cage's self-deprecating turn in *The Unbearable Weight Of Massive Talent*. So many stories to tell.

Richard Stacey

It feels somewhat dishonest trying to talk about cultural highlights in a year which more than ever has been about how I listen to music than the music itself. Clumsy attempts to play. Taking a step back from gluttonous consumption and reflexive deference to a culture which glorifies it, trying to become a better listener by accepting sometimes the more I hear the less I fully get to grips with. Simultaneously overwhelmed and ravenous, trying to plot a route forward to somewhere I can look back without falling prey to the living death of nostalgia.

Projects of the year for me were Smellington Piff's *Roma Supreme* and Isatta Sheriff's *Eat The Kiwi Skin* because I could relate instantly, and Shitty Boyz *Trifecta 2* because even after a dozen or so listens it baffled me to the point of speechlessness. Unlikely event of the year was MOR prog-rock titans Genesis at London's O2 Arena, from the epic ambition of "The Cinema Show" recalling a past which wasn't always the total shitshow of memory, to the abominable appropriations of "I Can't Dance", a bracing reminder not to get too carried away with that thought.

Joseph Stannard

The thrill of being able to experience live music again following 2020–21's pandemic restrictions still hasn't worn off. I doubt ever it will. This year I've attended phenomenal gigs by White Boy Scream, Oranssi Pazuzu, Mavis Staples, Sepultura, Hedvig Mollestad, ABC, Clarissa Connelly, The Bouchard Brothers and their former band Blue Öyster Cult, Jemma Freeman & The Cosmic Something, Devin Townsend, Gwar, Bill Frisell, and more. Meanwhile, organising events in Brighton, Manchester and Glasgow for *The Wire*'s 40th anniversary was a blast.

At the cinema and on demand, I've enjoyed Jordan Peele's *Nope*, Jacob Gentry's *Broadcast Signal Intrusion*, Jane Schoenbrun's *We're All Going To The World's Fair*, Joseph and Vanessa Winter's *Deadstream*, John Valley's *The Pizzagate Massacre*, Rob Savage's *Dashcam* and, above all, Aaron Moorhead and Justin Benson's stunning, heartfelt paean to DIY film making and the occult history of Los Angeles, *Something In The Dirt*. A televisual highlight of 2022 was the return of Mike Myers (*Wayne's World/ Austin Powers*) with his delightfully absurd conspiracy farce *The Pentaverate*. It was also terrific to see new work from Panos Cosmatos (*Beyond The Black Rainbow/ Mandy*) in the form of *The Viewing* (his episode of Guillermo del Toro's anthology series *Cabinet Of Curiosities*).

I've mostly been reading old non-fiction lately – *Let it Blurt: The Life & Times Of Lester Bangs* by Jim DeRogatis, *Love All The People* by Bill Hicks, *Are You Morbid?* by Thomas Gabriel Fischer – but high on my holiday reading list are Jason Pargin's *If This Book Exists, You're In The Wrong Universe*, Anders Fager's *Swedish Cults* and Phil Baker's *City Of The Beast: The London Of Aleister Crowley*.

Richard Thomas

2022 began in the past. In January, at Wigmore Hall, I listened to the music of the 16–18th centuries performed by Jordi Savall, Javier Díaz-Latorre, Andrew Lawrence-King and David Mayoral. I enjoyed performing in Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Zurich, Geneva, Paris, Brussels. The Supernormal festival in Oxfordshire was superb. I had a great holiday in the South of France. On my birthday I went to Connectivities, a deep history of the Mediterranean at Mucem, Marseille. I was also fortunate enough to attend a wonderful exhibition of Raoul Dufy's paintings at Hôtel de Caumont, Aix-en-Provence.

I watched many films, listened to tonnes of music and I read a lot. I will recommend a few books: *Daniel Defoe And The Bank Of England: The Dark Art Of Projectors* by Valerie Hamilton and Martin Parker, *GBH* by Ted Lewis, *The Ascent Of Rum Doodle* by WE Bowman and *We Have Always Lived In The Castle* by Shirley Jackson. I was fortunate enough to see the Royal Shakespeare Company's production of *My Neighbour Totoro* at London's Barbican Centre. Fantastic Brechtian panto with puppetry. To everyone involved I salute you.

Spenser Tomson

In April I went on a first date. We watched Joachim Trier's *The Worst Person In The World*, the third film in his Oslo trilogy. The central character – a woman who can't seem to settle in a relationship or focus on a creative pursuit – resonated with me a lot. I'm shit at dating and I often feel like people think of me as the oldest kid in the room. When the film ends with Art Garfunkel's version of Antônio Carlos Jobim's "Waters Of March", I felt simultaneously devastated and rapturously hopeful.

I listened to that song at least 50 times over the next couple of months and sought similar emotive dissonance elsewhere, like I was trying to exorcise the weird existential turbulence of nearing 40. I found the masterpiece that is *Never Stop Texting Me* by Claire Rousay & More Eaze, I became mildly re-obsessed with the short films of John Smith, I stopped worrying about what people think about me. In a few weeks, me and that first date will be spending the new year together in Oslo.

Rob Turner

Looking back on the year in music, the thing that looms larger than any gig or album is the 88 page grand jury indictment against YSL Records. There's a long, ugly history of rap lyrics being dragged into US courts, but this was a shit-spirited, sprawling classic of the form. With morbid detachment, the jurors hear the mercurial Atlanta freestyles of Young Thug and others as if they were taped under oath (*"Defendant states: Red just like Elmo but I never fucking giggle… In a Bentley on West Lee getting trailed by a sniper"*). It reads like a joke, but the artists concerned are still stuck in Fulton County Jail.

There were wonders too. The best thing I heard this year was a live set from Elvin Brandhi, slicing open new realities at the Sonic Protest festival using just an SP-404, a microphone and a pitch pedal. On record, a few labels stood out: Backwoodz Studioz, Scatter, mappa, Pi Recordings, and RVNG Intl. City Lights blew my mind twice, with books from Daniel Levin Becker and Will Alexander. Björk's *Sonic Symbolism* was superb. Oh, and I discovered the virtual worlds of Gareth Damian Martin, getting happily lost in their alien oceans. □

Highway To Hell

Attempting to turn anxiety into action, artists including Brian Eno, Daniel Bachman and more are engaging with the climate crisis with a new anger and urgency. By **Phil England**

In 2022 as the climate and nature emergencies became ever more urgent, and are perhaps now bound up with a wider unravelling, artists continued to raise awareness through a diversity of strategies, with two new and divergent responses discernible: despair and resignation, and an escalating will to action.

Brian Eno came up with a useful framing for his latest album *FOREVERANDEVERNOMORE*: "…artists are actually feelings-merchants… feelings are the beginnings of thoughts and the longterm attendants of them too… perhaps if we became re-enchanted by the amazing improbability of life; perhaps if we suffered regret and shame at what we've already lost; perhaps if we felt exhilarated by the challenges we face and what might yet become possible." Despite this upbeat mission statement, his own contribution is a gloomy affair. "There Were Bells" is the standout track, affecting and intensely sad, while "These Small Noises" offers us only the flames of hell: *"Go to Earth/Our hair on fire/Go to Hell/In Hell to burn"*.

The casual way Weyes Blood incorporates a climate metaphor into a love song on *And In The Darkness, Hearts Aglow* speaks of a sense of inevitability as the severity of wildfires escalates: *"California's my body and your fire runs over me"*, she sings on "Grapevine". On "God Turn Me Into A Flower" she yearns to merge more gracefully with the world. "The pliable softness of a flower has become my mantra as we barrel on towards an uncertain fate," she explains in the sleevenotes. "I see the heart as a guide, with an emanation of hope, shining through in this dark age."

Care and solidarity are useful watchwords for the times ahead. Björk's *Fossora* (a neologism meaning she who digs) is about the healing power of anchoring. *"At last/We stayed in one place long enough to/Shoot down deep hyphae roots that/Penetrate concrete and plastic"*, she sings on the title track. The album is more about the death of her mother and nature's cycles than our recent understanding of the way plants communicate, yet she remains upbeat about the future repeating *"Hope is a muscle"* on the lead single "Atopos".

The global target of a maximum 1.5 celsius average global temperature rise is such a bland expression, flattening everything out into one (not very significant sounding) number. Meanwhile, the climate emergency is playing out as a rapidly escalating series of climate extremes. This year, over in Virginia, American Primitive guitarist Daniel Bachman seemed to be feeling the numbers in his bones. On *Almanac Behind*, his guitar, banjo and fiddle are accompanied and obscured by the sounds of severe weather and faltering early warning broadcasts. It's brutal and unsettling. In the video for "540 Supercell" the subtitles read: "In the 400 some years since the European conquest of this land the Earth has warmed 1.3 degrees centigrade – a change that can be felt in every mountain hollow and along every hillside, up and down the ragged range. It can be seen in brustling fields of dead corn, blighted trees, and dried up mountain springs." The album's constant interruption signals an uncomfortable truth: that art and entertainment are being overtaken by events.

John Luther Adams continued his powerful series of longform climate-conscious compositions with *Sila: Breath Of The World*. Experimental in form, the layered and slowly evolving clouds of harmonics produced by five ensembles of musicians and singers seem to embody the depth and breadth of the changes underway and provide the listener with a space to process otherwise buried feelings about the gravity of what is now unfolding.

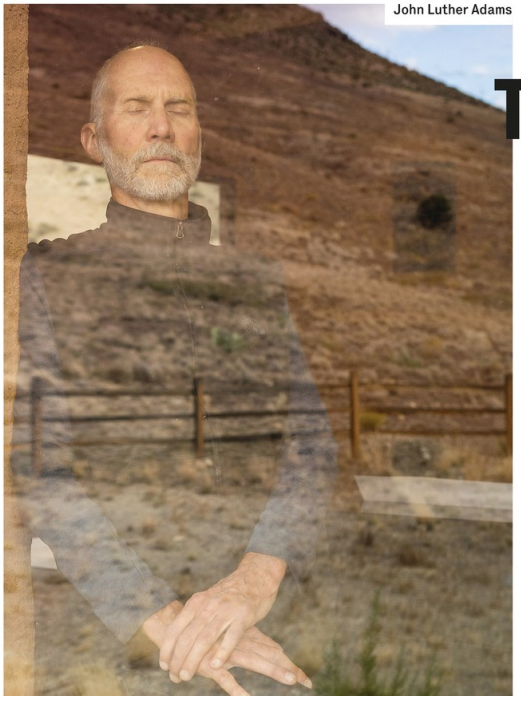
"We are on a highway to climate hell," warned UN Secretary-General António Guterres at the opening of the COP27 UN climate talks held in November 2022, "with our foot still on the accelerator." It was a colourful restatement of what the UN Environment Programme's "Emission Gap" report told us in October: "Policies currently in place point to a 2.8°C temperature rise by the end of the century [and] only an urgent system-wide transformation can avoid climate disaster."

Our collective lack of action is leading many to turn their climate anxiety into action. Since Lewis Gordon discussed climate-related releases in *The Wire* 419's Rewind round-up in 2019, we've had escalating waves of direct action in the UK with Extinction Rebellion followed by Insulate Britain, followed by Just Stop Oil. Meanwhile most sectors of the economy are going on strike, poverty and deprivation are widespread and essential services are at breaking point.

On the opener of The Smile's album *A Light For Attracting Attention*, it sounds like Thom Yorke is begging people to move to action and refuse to be divided: *"People in the streets/Please/We all want the same/Please/We are all the same"*. The Smile continues Radiohead by other means with Yorke and Jonny Greenwod joined by Sons Of Kemet drummer Tom Skinner. The environmental crisis remains a key theme, capturing a zeitgeisty sense of loss and anger in a way that's been an essential component of what the band have done since at least *Kid A*.

Reverend Billy & The Church Of Stop Shopping have a more direct relationship with climate activists. This radical performance community of over 50 people led by protest veteran and parody preacher Reverend Billy and his partner Savitri D have been lending their powerful support to movements intervening in the destruction of the Earth since 2005. Released in August, *Change Without Us* finds the troupe in more a reflective and perhaps even mournful mode.

It speaks with a refreshing and gut-wrenching directness, such as on the opener where the listener is confronted by a child from the near future hoping to go on a vacation and wondering what happened to "The Great Outdoors". It's a powerful set of anthems and provocations that goes way beyond the usual protest fare and manages to fulfil Eno's formulation of engendering feelings of re-enchantment, regret and exhilaration. □



John Luther Adams

Madeline Cass

In December of 2021, I had the honour of interviewing ambient legend Laraaji for *The Wire* 454. Among other things, we discussed his philosophy on the healing potential of sound, which has been honed through years of research and practice. In contrast to the popular notion that music can help modulate between normal and altered states of consciousness, Laraaji maintains that "we're always in a trance" that "determines how we experience the universe" – even when (or perhaps especially when) we do not notice it. Thus, sound can be a healing agent insofar as it introduces different rhythmic and tonal possibilities that help us change frequencies. Similar sentiments have recently been expressed in this magazine by jazz percussionist Hamid Drake, as well as composer and multimedia artist Hannah Catherine Jones, who compared the body to a symphony whose health is dependent on maintaining the right polyrhythms.

A few months after my conversation with Laraaji, I asked the Japanese vocalist and punk innovator Phew what she thought about using music to modulate trance states. "It's not a good idea to pull the listener into a trance!" was her emphatic reply. "Music plays a big role in propaganda and brainwashing, so I think musicians need to be aware of these things." As much as Laraaji's approach resonates with me, Phew makes an interesting point. One of the ways that neoliberal capitalism keeps itself entrenched in our lives is by entrancing us through its entertaining spectacles. When we are under its spell, we are prone to internalising its values without thinking too much about them, rationalising its violence as necessary or even natural. Over the past few years, a compound crisis of global pandemic, climate change and ascendant fascism has made remaining in the trance feel increasingly untenable even to many who could choose to live in it forever if we wanted to.

Many of the artists who have been making the most compelling work of 2022 are those who have been able to transmute the trauma of surviving a culture of violence into liberatory frameworks that open possibilities of collective healing. This ethos has long been exemplified by Moor Mother's Camae Ayewa. Last summer, during the opening weekend of Documenta 15 in Kassel, Germany, I listened from a bridge as Ayewa used her performance as a platform to call out the institutional complicity of art organisations like Documenta from a floating stage in the Fulda River: *"At some point, we must face the truth of the situation"*, she declared. *"Even around all of this art"*. Ayewa's performance came during a year of reckoning for the art world, as many high profile institutions have come under scrutiny for their hoarding of looted cultural artefacts and exploitative labour practices, as well as the amoral entities that launder their reputations by funding them. The art world loves harvesting cred from the labour of artists, but if it's ever going to be a site of any kind of meaningful healing, the first thing it must do is heal itself.

The work of Raven Chacon also engages the realities of institutional violence head-on. In 2022, the Diné composer won the 2022 Pulitzer Prize for Music for his *Voiceless Mass*, which employs a pipe organ and instrumental ensemble to create a sonic monument to Indigenous victims of religiously sanctioned genocide. By combining the sublime physicality of the organ with noisy, abrasive electronic textures, *Voiceless Mass* embodies the messy complexity of the healing process. Indeed, sometimes processing trauma necessitates the exorcising of one's own demons, such as in the harsh catharsis in the industrial rap of Backxwash.

In recent years, the term self-care has become something of a buzzword. While there is certainly value in taking care of oneself, there is an even greater challenge involved in taking care of each other at the systemic, structural level. The unfortunate reality is that not every artist has access to housing, mental health care, or the community they need to thrive creatively.

Over the past several years, the Oakland label Ratskin Records has risen to meet the needs of its (largely queer, disabled, non-white, economically precarious) community, becoming what executive director Sharmi Basu calls "a mutual aid network centred in sound". Earlier this year, Basu released *Sicko*, their debut LP as Beast Nest. The album pays tribute to the friends Basu lost in the 2016 Ghost Ship fire, reflecting the artist's ongoing process of physical and emotional healing. "There's just so much wrong with this world right now," Basu told me in *The Wire* 457. "I think that art is important and that it does help. So it's the goal to have everyone be in a place where they can be sustainable enough to create freely." A similar intention drives the activity of Richmond, Virginia imprint Grimalkin Records.

By emphasising values like accessibility, care, collaboration and community, these labels are seeking to provide an alternative to the dominant capitalist paradigm of the entertainment industry. They demonstrate that the ways in which music can facilitate healing are not limited to the individual, because healing is not simply an individual process. □

Fate Healers

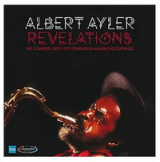
Musicians trying to heal the traumas of social rupture need to look for collective solutions instead of focusing on the individual.
By **Emily Pothast**

Beast Nest

Courtesy Ratskin Records

Archive Releases Of The Year

1–50



1 **Albert Ayler**
Revelations: The Complete ORTF 1970 Fondations Maeght Recordings (INA/Elemental Music)

The first complete document of the free jazz visionary's last recorded concerts in July 1970 saw gospel, marches and folk themes woven around his Impulse! catalogue, with notable contributions from vocalist Mary Maria Parks and featuring six previously unheard improvisations. Stewart Smith said: "Ayler is magnificent throughout, the spiritual intensity of his playing overwhelming at times. *Revelations* is less a final testament than the sound of Ayler gathering everything he knows and pushing into the sublime." (May/459)

2 **Cheri Knight**
American Rituals (Freedom To Spend)

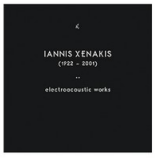
A decade before her stint as the singer and bassist with 1990s alt country group Blood Oranges, Knight committed these multi-instrumental compositions to tape as a student, showing the influence of onetime mentor Pauline Oliveros but articulating her own meditative, cyclical patterns. Leah Kardos said: "While these pieces flirt with elemental process based minimalism a la early Steve Reich, they defy abstraction, maintaining an atmosphere of care, fascination and intention." (September/463)

3 **Pat Thomas**
New Jazz Jungle: Remembering (Feedback Moves)

As taken by jungle as his fellow improvisor Derek Bailey, Pat Thomas's 1997 album showed a less familiar side to the versatile pianist, with his interpretation of the genre refracted through Webern and Schoenberg. Andy Hamilton said: "A unique synthesis of modern composition and dance genres… ten hypnotic tracks of spartan, ultra-low bass jungle breaks, intercut with vocal and orchestral samples, against frantic polymetric percussion." (December/466)

4 **Derek Bailey**
Domestic Jungle (Scatter)

Long unreleased, save for small excerpts included on the 1997 *Guitars On Mars* compilation, these home recordings of Derek Bailey improvising over jungle records played on pirate radio offered not only an ear-catching double billing but a satisfying insight into the guitarist's ardent craft. Joshua Minsoo Kim said: "His melodies can feel like they're tiptoeing across the beat before matching their kinetic swerve, telegraphing a real sense of dynamic energy between both 'players'." (August/462)



5 **Iannis Xenakis**
Electroacoustic Works (Karlrecords)

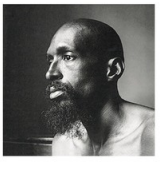
A five disc set marking the composer's centenary, the scale of *Electroacoustic Works* encompassed the molecular and the cosmic, from crumbling ancient civilisations to late-career digital sound manipulations, as full of ritual as rigour. Neil Kulkarni said: "This is sound that doesn't let you simply observe but that demands an active physical and emotional response to its still-shocking otherness, sound so powerful it renders both his contemporaries in experimental composition and the innumerable noiseniks since nigh-on entirely superfluous." (April/458)

6 **Oksana Linde**
Aquatic And Other Worlds (1983–1989) (Buh)

Largely ignored until recently in electronic music histories, the Venezuelan composer looked back further than her previous career as a research chemist to her original love, ocean life, to inspire these compositions filled with evocative bubbling currents and eerie beauty. Spenser Tomson said: "Linde focuses these utopian textures into characterful and compelling compositions, wrapping them around a polished pulse and draping them with chords that switch between weird minors." (September/463)

7 **Terry Jennings/Charles Curtis**
Piece For Cello And Saxophone (Saltern)

Perhaps the American minimalist whose music was most faithful to the term, Terry Jennings's career never achieved the profile of his friend La Monte Young and was cut short by addiction and early death. But this deceptively titled 1960 composition for just intoned solo cello, performed by Charles Curtis, showed how his influence cast a quiet shadow from Harold Budd to Wandelweiser.



8 **Julius Eastman**
Stay On It (Week-End)

A contrasting pair from the composer whose posthumous profile continues to grow: the title track offered dynamic, pop-inflected minimalism performed by Creative Associates in 1973, while Eastman's 1981 piece *The Holy Presence Of Joan D'Arc* drew thunderous motifs and dissonant dark timbres from ten cellos. Mariam Rezaei said: "Pressing archival recordings in this way preserves the composer's original vision. These recordings represent the fullest manifestation of Eastman's luminous presence." (May/459)

9 **Les Rallizes Dénudés**
The Oz Tapes (Temporal Drift/Oz)

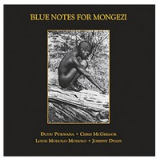
The first official LP release from the Japanese group, formed in 1967, whose mysterious reputation stands in inverse proportion to the size of their catalogue. Known for Takashi Mizutani's lengthy, skull-rattling guitar improvisations, this live recording from 1973 also contains moments of contrasting delicacy. Edwin Pouncey said: "A sonic entity that transcends rock music as it is traditionally recognised." (January 2023/467)

10 **Broadcast**
Microtronics Vols 1 & 2 (Warp)

One of a trio of 2022 reissues from the group led by James Cargill and the late Trish Keenan, these 21 instrumentals showed Broadcast repaying their debt to the BBC Radiophonic Workshop and library music with interest, distilling influences into evocative new realms of meaning. Helena Celle said: "Perhaps the legacy of Broadcast is not a pining for lost futures, but that of a strange attractor, drawing us toward wider inclusions." (March/457)

11 **Anthony Moore**
Flying Doesn't Help (Drag City)

Recorded between his production work for Kevin Ayers and Manfred Mann's Earth Band at London's Workhouse Studio, the Slapp Happy founder's 1979 LP combined his avant pop credentials with raga, soundtrack snippets and terse new wave structures. Brian Morton said: "With collaborators such as Chris Slade, Festus, Robert Vogel and above all Charles Hayward on board, it combines a casually jammed out looseness of articulation with a rigorous sense of form and overall sound." (July/461)



12 **Blue Notes**
Blue Notes For Mongezi (Ogun)

Less than a fortnight after racism and medical neglect led to the 1975 death of trumpeter and South African exile Mongezi Feza, the remaining members of The Blue Notes convened for a cathartic improvised session, edited down to this double album. Francis Gooding said: "The band effortlessly shapeshift from raucous free improvisation to bass heavy neo-marabi grooves, cod-military marches to pummelling funkiness, near silence to blazing noise." (September/463)

13 ***Summer Of Soul (...Or, When The Revolution Could Not Be Televised) OST***
Various (Legacy)

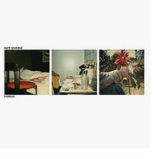
Delayed by the challenges of licensing its previously unreleased live material, the soundtrack to Questlove's 2021 documentary about the 1969 Harlem Cultural Festival proved as rousing as the film, with tracks by Nina Simone, Sly & The Family Stone, Mahalia Jackson and Mavis Staples finally receiving an encore.

14 **The Mystic Revelation Of Rastafari**
Grounation (Soul Jazz)

Drummer Count Ossie and saxophonist Cedric Brooks led some of Jamaica's finest jazz musicians on this landmark of roots reggae, which brought the musicians together with Rastafari consciousness through chants, Samuel Clayton's narration and, most crucially, three-part nyabinghi drumming. Steve Barker said: "*Grounation* is rightly regarded as reggae's tablets of stone when it comes to the influence of Rastafari over the subsequent development of the music, making it one of the truly essential components of any decent reggae collection." (September/463)

15 **Charles Stepney**
Step On Step (International Anthem/The Charles Stepney Masters)

Whether arranging for the Chess label, playing vibes for Eddie Harris or producing Minnie Riperton, Charles Stepney straddled Chicago's jazz, pop and R&B scenes. These 23 home recordings showed the magic before the studio, including early versions of tracks later recorded with Earth, Wind & Fire and Rotary Connection. John Morrison said: "Through these delightfully rough and characterful recordings the listener is given a first hand look at how Stepney united strands of soul, jazz and avant garde music." (December/466)



16 **Nate Scheible**
Fairfax (Warm Winters)

Originally a 2017 tape release, *Fairfax* was itself based around a cassette Scheible stumbled upon featuring an unknown woman's messages to her lover, sympathetically amplifying her words of longing with understated washes of hazy instrumentation. Neil Kulkarni said: "From such tender detritus, Scheible has created a document of human love that's irresistibly compelling." (February/456)

17 **Masayuki Takayanagi & New Direction Unit**
Eclipse (Black Editions)

In its remastered version, the Japanese guitarist's 1975 album revealed the subtlety and interplay within his quartet even amid seemingly endless noise punishment. Phil Freeman said: "Takayanagi's reputation as the ultimate guitar terrorist, the man who made audience members wilt, who could kill houseplants with a single apocalyptic slash across the strings, is long established. But his love of volume, distortion, speed and power was always tempered with a keen sense of dynamics." (June/460)

18 **The Pyramids**
Aomawa (The 1970s Recordings) (Strut)

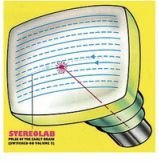
Covering the first incarnation of the spiritual/Afrofuturist jazz ensemble led to this day by saxophonist Idris Ackamoor, this four disc set included 1973's *Lalibela*, 1974's *King Of Kings*, 1976's *Birth/Speed/Merging* and a 1975 live performance for TV station KQED

19 **Sonic Youth**
In/Out/In (Three Lobed)

Recorded between 2000–10 and often in Sonic Youth's own studios, these six previously unreleased, mostly instrumental tracks found the group relaxing into exploratory jam band mode. Neil Kulkarni said: "Free from the need to shape these ideas into conventional structures you hear the band at their most Can-like – tracks like "Basement Contender" and "Out & In" are without trajectory or any need for a narrative, recalling the most sprawling moments of *Daydream Nation*." (March/457)

20 **Joyce with Mauricio Maestro**
Natureza (Far Out)

Planned as a sequel to the Brazilian singer-songwriter's 1975 album *Passarinho Urbano* but left unreleased, *Natureza* was born from Joyce's residency at Manhattan nightclub Cachaça. Marking her first collaboration with percussionist Tutty Moreno, it included an 11 minute version of "Feminina". Joshua Minsoo Kim said: "The album… provides a crucial window into this era of Joyce's life, both professionally and personally." (November/465)



21 **Stereolab**
Pulse Of The Early Brain (Switched On Vol 5)
(Duophonic/Warp)

The fifth and final instalment of Stereolab's *Switched On* rarities series included two tracks from the group's 1997 collaboration with Nurse With Wound, *Simple Headphone Mind*, a live version of "Cybele's Reverie" and Autechre's remix of "Refractions In The Plastic Pulse". John Morrison said: "With *Pulse Of The Early Brain*… Stereolab compile non-album tracks, demos and live recordings that point to the dynamic and evolving character of the band's particular brand of retrofuturism." (September/463)

22 **Pavement**
Terror Twilight: Farewell Horizontal (Matador)

Pavement's final album from 1999 bore signs of its troubled gestation. Yet this reissue put aside the clashes with producer Nigel Godrich by adopting his preferred running order. The Bsides and material from earlier sessions among the 28 bonus tracks found the group as contrary, inspired and self-sabotaging as ever. Raymond Cummings said: "*Terror Twilight* showcased a sensibility Pavement hadn't demonstrated previously: it's an LP rooted in terrestrial travails that often seemed equipped to explore the outer solar system." (April/458)

23 **Lou Reed**
Words & Music, May 1965 (Light In The Attic)

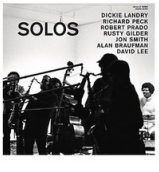
Discovered in a sealed self-mailed envelope after Reed's death, these acoustic demos recorded with John Cale included charmingly folky early versions of Velvet Underground songs such as "Heroin" and "Waiting For The Man" alongside others that would never see the light. Claire Biddles said: "For those of us who have tolerated endless mixes, demos and alternate versions bulking out Velvet Underground reissues over the years, it's a wonderful surprise to hear something so genuinely moving and fresh from that era." (August/462)

24 **John McGuire**
Pulse Music (Unseen Worlds)

This welcome addition to the American composer's sparse discography collected four 1970s works where serialist techniques intersect with Reich/Riley minimalism in scintillating patterns. As well as experiments with voltage control, trigger pulses, synthesizers and tape feedback, on "Pulse Music II" his exacting rhythms were realised by Bremen orchestra and four pianists. Julian Cowley said: "With its radiant bell-like clanging and relentlessly rocking ostinato, the ecstatic minimalism of this pulse music prototype is simply addictive." (April/458)

25 **Jigen**
Blood's Finality (^ ^)

Brittle breakbeats skittered fearlessly into free jazz cellars and through the haunted halls of contemporary classical in search of a new architecture on this uncompromising dispatch from Toyko's late 1990s underground.



26 **Dickie Landry**
Solos (Unseen Worlds)

Arriving in late 1960s Manhattan from rural Louisiana, Dickie Landry was both documentarian – as photographer – and participant in its intense creativity, as a composer and ensemble saxophonist for Philip Glass. Glass's Chatham Square label originally released this edit of a five hour free jazz session featuring several fellow members. Julian Cowley said: "*Solos*, closer in spirit to John Coltrane, Albert Ayler and Ornette Coleman, is entirely improvised and bracingly ramshackle." (November/465)

27 **Lucy Liyou**
Welfare/Practice (American Dreams)

The cadence-led storytelling of Korean pansori operas and Klein's blurred autofictions informed this doubled-up reissue of the Philadelphia artist's 2020 and 2021 albums, where diaristic, episodes of familial drama were narrated with eerie detachment by text-to-speech narration. James Gormley said: "There's an acknowledgment that between the experience and the communication of emotional trauma, there's a denaturing process. It's never entirely raw or unmediated… In Liyou's case it becomes something pretty captivating, and not by appealing to voyeurism." (August/462)

28 **Lining Time**
Strike (Hot Salvation)

While often reflecting its five members' origins as students of dance theatre, feminist performance collective Lining Time's sole 1982 LP continued the work of The Raincoats and The Slits by further unravelling post-punk and singing it anew. Claire Biddles said: "It's this moulding of ultra-DIY means into a clean, effective musical and social message that makes *Strike* so intriguing, even at its most po-faced. The album is full of space and silence, room to swell with additional voices and rudimentary instrumentation." (July/461)

29 **Lennie Tristano**
Personal Recordings 1946–1970 (Mosaic)

The six CD set featuring live and studio recordings counters the received wisdom of the pianist as a cold, cerebral figurehead of Cool School jazz. With solo, trio and sextet pieces, it included free music studio sessions predating his landmark 1949 releases *Intuition* and *Digression*. Andy Hamilton said: "Mosaic have released a treasure trove of previously unissued material showing pianist Lennie Tristano at white heat, his rhythmically complex music both playful and passionately intense." (April/458)

30 **Frank Zappa**
Waka/Wazoo (UMC)

Zappa's 1972 albums *Waka/Jawaka* and *The Grand Wazoo* were united with demos and outtakes from their sessions in this box set. Still recovering from injuries received in an assault the previous year, Zappa became conductor of his horn and trumpet-heavy Electric Orchestra, a scaled down version of which featured at a San Francisco gig also included here.

31 **Cecil Taylor**
The Complete Legendary Live Return Concert At The Town Hall NYC, November 4, 1973 (Oblivion)

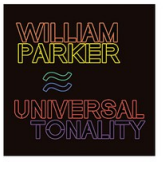
This expanded version of the concert heard in part on Taylor's 1974 album *Spring Of Two Blue-J's* restored the 88 minute opener "Autumn/Parade", with the pianist accompanied by Sirone on bass, Andrew Cyrille on drums and Jimmy Lyons on alto sax. Phil Freeman said: "Taylor launches the group with a percussive, almost catchy melody, and they chew it up for an hour and a half, the energy level never flagging for a moment." (February/456)

32 **Branko Mataja**
Over Fields And Mountains (Numero Group)

The homesickness felt by Yugoslavia born Mataja after he settled in the US spurred him to record this collection of folk tunes. Electrified by his performances on self-built guitars and amps, they reverberated with melancholy. Neil Kulkarni said: "What remains enthralling is how an essentially folklorist act of recall can end up sounding so otherworldly, so futuristic in its cosmic spaces." (May/459)

33 **Sun Ra Arkestra**
Nothing Is… Complete And Revisited (ezz-thetics)

Remastering offers improved sound on this reissue which followed the 2005 ESP-Disk' single CD tracklisting in capturing the Arkestra at St Lawrence University, New York in 1966. Longtime sidemen Marshall Allen, John Gilmore, Pat Patrick, Ronnie Boykins and Clifford Jarvis all accompanied Sun Ra on his interstellar travels. Andy Hamilton said: "*Nothing Is* appears clearly and cleanly as an apogee of Sun Ra's futuristic free jazz." (June/460)



34 **William Parker**
Universal Tonality (AUM Fidelity)

With six pieces unfolding across two CDs over nearly two hours, *Universal Tonality* documented a concert in December 2002 exploring the titular concept. Joined by 16 musicians, some of whom had never played together before, and wielding everything from saxophone to shakuhachi, Parker's experiment in "breathing together" yielded gratifyingly utopian music. Raymond Cummings said: "There are, of course, deep grooves generated by Parker's elemental basslines but also huge, billowing freeform interludes reminiscent of Sun Ra's conducted improvisations." (December/466)

35 **ONO**
Kate Cincinnati (American Dreams)

The uplifting sounds of gospel were dragged violently back to Earth on this 1982 release by Chicago's ONO. Blending industrial clang and deconstructed funk with vocalist travis's compelling presence, they transcended and defiled in equal measure. Joseph Stannard said: "It's noise, it's industrial, it's improv, it's blues – it's ONO ferfucksake. Essential, obviously." (January 2023/467)

36 **Godspeed You Black Emperor!**
All Lights Fucked On The Hairy Amp Drooling
(Bandcamp)

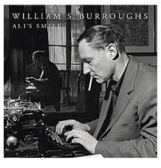
Released in a run of 33 cassettes back when GYBE! was merely the alias of Efrim Menuck and intended to be his farewell to music, *All Lights Fucked…* could never live up to its legend, a fact which may have prompted Menuck to finally issue it on the group's Bandcamp page this year. Nevertheless, among roughly stitched patchwork of abrupt noise, dank strumming and spoken samples are the seeds of the collective that would just a few years later release *F#A#∞*.

37 **Gavin Bryars**
The Sinking Of The Titanic (Superior Viaduct)

Imagining how the Titanic's stoic band might have continued to perform the hymn "Autumn" even as the waves submerged them, the album that launched a million ambient classical acolytes resurfaced for a US reissue. Companion track *Jesus' Blood Never Failed Me Yet* was equally essential, with musicians including Michael Nyman on organ and Derek Bailey on guitar accompanying a street singer's plaintive devotional.

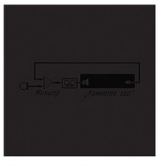
38 **Chillin Villain Empire**
Chillin Villains, We Represent Billions 1993–2003
(Nyege Nyege Tapes)

Centred around MCs Riddlore and Tray-Loc and producer/MC NgaFish, Chillin Villain Empire honed their raps at Los Angeles's Good Life Cafe, sharing the open mic with The Pharcyde and Jurassic 5. With tracks largely taken from their 2005 album *Villainism*, this was less a comprehensive retrospective than an introduction to their distinctive approach. Mosi Reeves said: ""Untitled" is all verbal ferocity against wack MCs, a furious cipher session brought to life." (July/461)



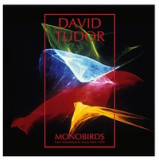
39 **William S Burroughs**
Ali's Smile (Paradigm)

The short story reading here was originally donated by Burroughs in 1971 to aid Brighton's Unicorn Bookshop after an obscenity prosecution – its companion a journalist's taped interview from 1963, with Burroughs sharing his thoughts on creativity and reading from the as yet unfinished *Nova Express*. Brian Morton said: "What's striking beyond the text… is Burroughs almost unconsciously orchestrating the non-vocal accompaniment of paper rustle, snagged cigarettes, traffic somewhere in the background, perhaps the breath of another in the room." (February/456)



40 **Surface Of The Earth**
Surface Of The Earth (Black Editions)

Wellington trio Surface Of The Earth rivalled fellow New Zealanders The Dead C in their dedication to distorted, droning noise. Cheap amps and fortuitous venue acoustics enhanced the sense of eternal sonic morass on this release, originally from 1995. Bill Meyer said: "The boom of the wooden meeting hall and the indiscriminate compression of cassette recording applied two more filters of glorious ruination. Acrid and viscous, this shit will stick to your ribs like tar." (July/461)



41 **David Tudor**
Monobirds (Topos)

Tudor recorded these pieces in 1969 while installing a Moog synthesizer at an Indian studio, revisiting one a decade later as part of an aborted laser extravaganza at New York's Xenon discotheque. On both occasions he pushed beyond the equipment's boundaries, hacking voltages and manipulating feedback with striking results. Brian Morton said: "Almost no one presented with a set of headphones would guess the provenance. This is far removed from Tudor's work with John Cage." (May/459)

42 **Scritti Politti**
Anomie & Bonhomie (Rough Trade)

Little loved on its 1999 release, Scritti Politti's fourth album was stylistically and temporally distant from its 1988 predecessor, with Green Gartside bringing in Mos Def, Lee Majors and Meshell Ndegeocello and rocking out between ballads and rootsy grooves. Joseph Stannard said: "There's no denying that *Anomie & Bonhomie* is an eccentric album. But then Green Gartside, for all his reputation as a smooth operator, is an eccentric person. This odd, honest music deserves to be heard." (July/461)

43 **Coil**
Constant Shallowness Leads To Evil (Dais)

A vinyl reissue for this 2000 Coil release, which offered more overt nightmares than the whispered nocturnes of its near contemporary *Musick To Play In The Dark Vol 2*. Its compositional chaos, miasmic synthesizers and sadistic stereo panning reached an apex on the 18 part "Tunnel Of Goats". Emily Pothast said: "Driven by the maniacal purr of Peter Christopherson's Serge modular synthesizer, *Constant Shallowness* is a descent into the bowels of the band's collective id." (September/463)

44 **John M Bennett**
A Flattened Face Fogs Through (Editions Basilic)

Poet John M Bennett has been mangling the mundanities of middle America into grotesque verse since the 1970s; *A Flattened Face Fogs* Through compiled home recordings he made between 1986–95 in which the surreal kick of his words is supplemented by sound manipulations, flutes and an array of unsettling FM synth patches.

45 **Peter Brötzmann/Fred Van Hove/Han Bennink**
Jazz In Der Kammer Nr 71 Deutsches Theater/ Berlin/GDR 04/11/1974 (Trost)

Documenting the first show on the eastern side of the Berlin Wall by a free jazz act from the West, this album captured the trio on muscular, combative form, with pianist Fred Van Hove adding contrasting moments of absurdity to the wrestle. Bill Meyer said: "Of course Brötzmann sounded at home in the slugfests, but he also undercut Bennink's wildman antics with gravely sorrowful clarinet dirges." (September/463)

46 **Aunt Sally**
Aunt Sally (Mesh Key)

Long out of print, the sole studio album from the Osaka group formed and fronted by Hiromi Moritani aka Phew had less in common with the R&B riffs of her inspiration The Sex Pistols than a darkly psychedelic rush, with piano waltzes and hushed, ghostly guitar ballads pointing forward to Phew's varied future.

47 **Suicide**
Surrender (Mute/BMG)

Remastering added fresh bite to the most familiar tracks on this compilation spanning 25 years of studio recordings from the New York synth punk duo. But previously unreleased versions of "Girl" and "Frankie Teardrop" also showed that Suicide still have the power to surprise. Neil Kulkarni said: "*Surrender* is essential for diehards, then, but with enough breadth and depth to serve as a fitting launchpad into one of the greatest discographies in rock 'n' roll." (May/459)

48 **Valentina Goncharova**
Ocean: Symphony For Electric Violin And Other Instruments In 10+ Parts (Hidden Harmony)

Drawn away from her classical studies by Tangerine Dream and Yoko Ono, the Ukrainian born, Estonia based violinist and composer Valentina Goncharova was assisted in realising her ideas by her electronics engineer husband, who built her an electric violin and adapted household items into DIY instruments. Low tech but high concept, this 1988 double album was an ambitious, mystical journey through the possibilities of amplified strings and multitracked tape.

49 **Sirone**
Artistry (Moved-By-Sound)

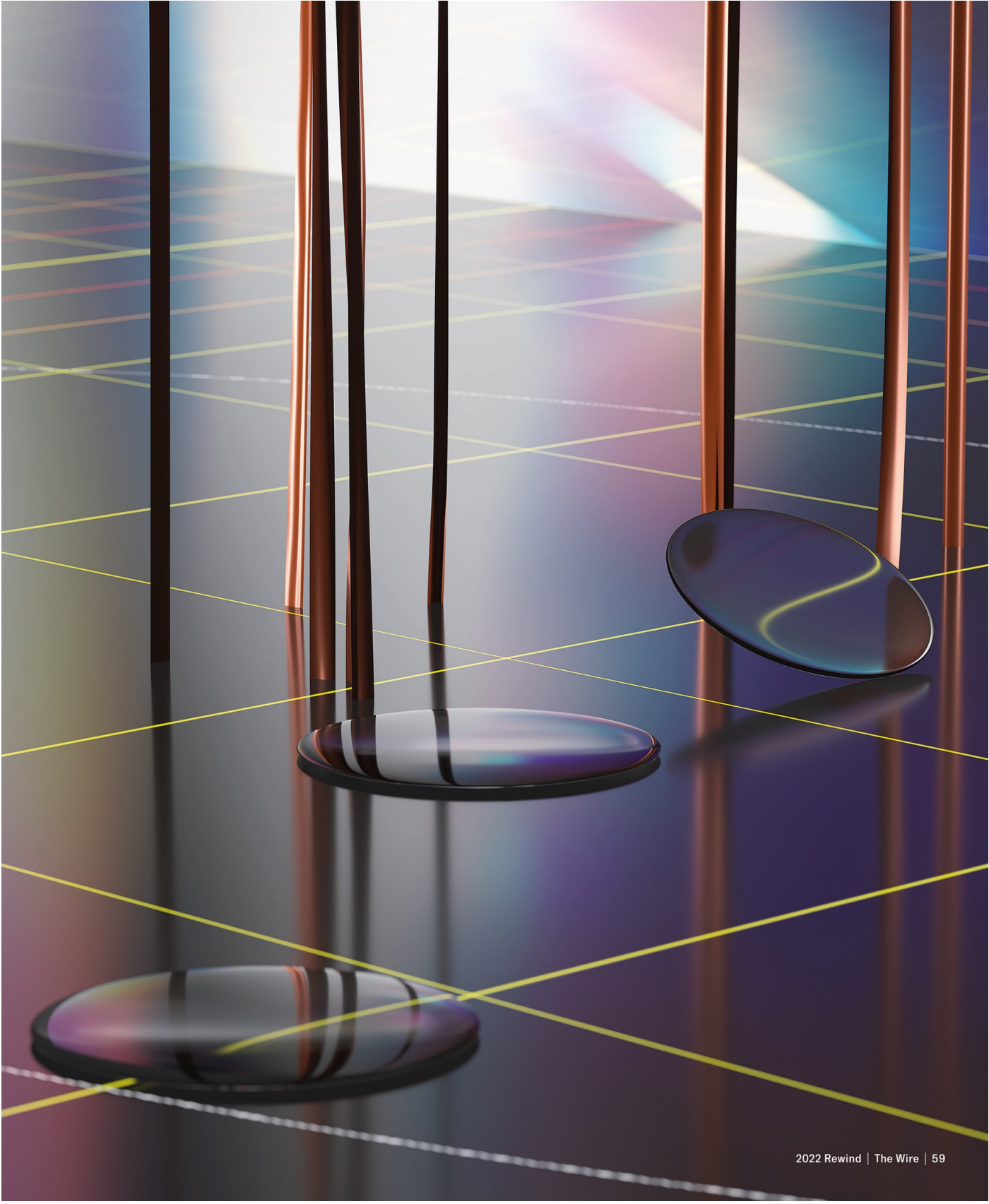
Norris Jones aka Sirone's first album as leader pursued a similar free improvisation meets contemporary classical path to The Revolutionary Ensemble, which he co-founded in 1970. Recorded in 1978, it brought in flautist James Newton, cellist Muneer Bernard Fennell and drummer Don Moye. Daniel Spicer said: "Sirone's bass playing is wildly expressive throughout, flinging out knotted flurries of taut plunks and elastic boings, while Newton's weightless flutterings add an airy lightness, even as Moye digs in with brutal muscularity." (August/462)

50 **Yasuaki Shimizu**
Kiren (Palto Flats)

Recorded in 1984 as a sequel to his 1982 album *Kakashi* but unreleased until 2022, *Kiren* found the Japanese composer, formerly of Mariah, inventively exploiting the tension between the vocabularies of dance, new wave and more awkward experimental structures. Claire Biddles said: "The listener is instead forced into a tentative position on the edge of the dancefloor – the perfect spot in which to get fixated on each micro-movement of Shimizu's kaleidoscopic compositions." (June/460)

The Electorate
This year's chart was compiled from the votes of the following contributors and staff (each voter's individual release of the year is shown in brackets)

Vanessa Ague (Julius Eastman *Stay On It*)
Jennifer Lucy Allan (Cheri Knight *American Rituals*)
Steve Barker (Alhaji Waziri Oshomah *World Spirituality Classics 3: The Muslim Highlife Of Alhaji Waziri Oshomah*)
Robert Barry (Terry Jennings *Piece For Cello And Saxophone*)
Emily Bick (John McGuire *Pulse Music*)
Claire Biddles (Cheri Knight *American Rituals*)
Matthew Blackwell (Les Rallizes Dénudés *The Oz Tapes*)
Helena Celle (After Dinner *Paradise Of Replica*)
Raymond Cummings (Various *Summer Of Soul (…Or, When The Revolution Could Not Be Televised)*)
Phil Freeman (Albert Ayler *Revelations: The Complete ORTF 1970 Fondations Maeght Recordings*)
Noel Gardner (Masayuki Takayanagi & New Direction Unit *Eclipse*)
Francis Gooding (Pat Thomas *New Jazz Jungle: Remembering*)
James Gormley (ONO *Kate Cincinnati*)
Kurt Gottschalk (Derek Bailey *Domestic Jungle*)
Louise Gray (Lining Time *Strike*)
George Grella (Glenn Gould *The Complete Unreleased 1981 Studio Sessions*)
Jason Gross (Various *Summer Of Soul (…Or, When The Revolution Could Not Be Televised)*)
James Gui (Godspeed You Black Emperor! *All Lights Fucked On The Hairy Amp Drooling*)
Andy Hamilton (Lennie Tristano *Personal Recordings 1946–1970*)
Tony Herrington (Derek Bailey *Domestic Jungle*)
Mlloš Hroch (Sonic Youth *In/Out/In*)
Jo Hutton (Julius Eastman *Stay On It*)
Leah Kardos (Cheri Knight *American Rituals*)
Joshua Minsoo Kim (Joyce *Natureza*)
Biba Kopf (Takehisa Kosugi + Akio Suzuki *New Sense Of Hearing*)
Steph Kretowicz (Beat Happening *Jamboree*)
Neil Kulkarni (Come *Don't Ask Don't Tell*)
Dave Mandl (Frank Zappa & The Mothers Of Invention *The Mothers 1971*)
Peter Margasak (Albert Ayler *Revelations: The Complete ORTF 1970 Fondations Maeght Recordings*)
Marc Masters (Albert Ayler *Revelations: The Complete ORTF 1970 Fondations Maeght Recordings*)
Ryan Meehan (Pavement *Terror Twilight/Farewell Horizontal*)
Bill Meyer (Fred Anderson & Hamid Drake *From The River To The Ocean*)
John Morrison (Charles Stepney *Step On Step*)
Brian Morton (William S Burroughs *Ali's Smile*)
Louis Pattison (Various *Ghost Riders*)
Antonio Poscic (Oksana Linde *Aquatic And Other Worlds*)
Edwin Pouncey (Albert Ayler *Revelations: The Complete ORTF 1970 Fondations Maeght Recordings*)
Mosi Reeves (Chillin Villain Empire *Chillin Villains, We Represent Billions 1993–2003*)
Tony Rettman (Surface Of The Earth *Surface Of The Earth*)
Simon Reynolds (Angel Rada/Miguel A Noya *The Early Uraniun Recordings+*)
Mariam Rezaei (Pat Thomas *New Jazz Jungle: Remembering*)
Ilia Rogatchevski (Sculpture *Collected Constructs 2001–2010*)
Dave Segal (Keith Papworth *Hard Hitter*)
Stewart Smith (Pat Thomas *New Jazz Jungle: Remembering*)
Daniel Spicer (Frank Zappa *Waka/Wazoo*)
Joseph Stannard (Ornette Coleman *Round Trip: Ornette Coleman On Blue Note*)
Spenser Tomson (Gavin Bryars *The Sinking Of The Titanic*)
Rob Turner (Lucy Liyou *Welfare/Practice*)
Derek Walmsley (Anthony Moore *Flying Doesn't Help*)
Meg Woof (Jigen *Blood's Finality*)
Shane Woolman (The Mystic Revelation Of Rastafari *Grounation*)
Rob Young (Nucleus *Torrid Zone: The Vertigo Recordings 1970–75*)



Reviews Index

Soundcheck

A–Z

61 Christine Abdelnour & Andy Moor
61 Theophilus Oluwafifehami Ajayi
61 Amefrican Grunges
61 Daniel Bachman
62 Big Joanie
69 Blood Rhythms
62 The Brother Moves On
62 Christeene
70 Circuit Des Yeux & Claire Rousay
64 Alvin Curran
64 The Dowling Poole
64 FaUSt featuring Keiji Haino
66 Ben Frost
63 Satoko Fujii
66 Ghoëst
66 Melvin Gibbs
73 Hieroglyphic Being
66 Ryoji Ikeda
64 I Know I'm An Alien
67 Philip Jeck
69 Leslie Keffer
69 Leslie Keffer & R Stevie Moore
64 Kitten Pyramid
65 Klein
67 Low Res
68 Roc Marciano & The Alchemist
68 MoE/Bruxa Maria
68 MoE Y Escalantes
68 Anthony Moore
68 Mthunzi Mvubu
68 Jérôme Noetinger
70 No Home
70 Rascali Klepitoire
70 Julia Reidy & Morten Joh
70 Dawn Richard & Spencer Zahn
73 Vanessa Rossetto
70 Claire Rousay
70 Claire Rousay & E Fishpool
71 Rubbish Music
67 Slumberland featuring Sainkho Namtchylak
74 Akai Solo
71 Tyshawn Sorey Trio + 1
72 Sourdure
72 Stabbing
72 Twinkle3 featuring David Sylvian & Kazuko Hohki
72 Urban Eden
67 Marc Urselli's SteppenDoom
72 Venus Ex Machina
73 Beau Wanzer & Hieroglyphic Being
74 Weyes Blood
74 billy woods x Messiah Musik
74 Yungmorpheus
62 Various *Black Metal Rainbows*
64 Various *Clap. An Anatomy Of Applause*
62 Various *Dark Side Of The Sacred Star*
64 Various *Fragility Of Sounds*
66 Various *Imaginary Landscapes*
69 Various *Paroxysm: A Benefit Compilation For Leslie Keffer*
74 Various *Xtended Vox*

Christeene

Dawn Richard & Spencer Zahn

75 **The Columns**

The Boomerang

82 Alterations
85 Celtic Frost
82 Deicide
82 The Ex
82 The Fall
84 The Jimi Hendrix Experience
84 Joyce with Mauricio Maestro
84 Meredith Monk
84 Alva Noto & Ryuichi Sakamoto
85 Les Rallizes Dénudés
83 Sidney Sager & The Ambrosian Singers
86 Topdown Dialectic
86 Markos Vamvakaris
82 Venom
86 Denis Wize

Print Run

88 *Turn On, Tune In, Drift Off: Ambient Music's Psychedelic Past* by Victor Szabo
89 *Everything Keeps Dissolving: Conversations With Coil* edited by Nick Soulsby
89 *Junk Percussion: Notes For The Future* by Roger Turner & Mari Kamada
90 *For Zitkála-Šá* by Raven Chacon
90 *The Northern Silence: Journeys In Nordic Music & Culture* by Andrew Mellor
90 *Hungry Beat: The Scottish Independent Pop Underground Movement (1977–1984)* by Douglas MacIntyre & Grant McPhee with Neil Cooper
91 *Wetland Project: Explorations In Sound, Ecology And Post-Geographical Art* edited by Brady Marks & Mark Timmings

On Screen

92 James Sharp *The Jangling Man: The Martin Newell Story*
93 Alexandra Cabral & Ian Svenonius *The Lost Record*

On Location

94 Semibreve, Braga, Portugal
94 Midwife, London, UK
95 Object Collection: *Automatic Writing*, New York, US
95 Cyborg Soloists, London, UK
96 Akousma, Paris, France
96 Abdullah Ibrahim: EFG London Jazz Festival, London, UK
97 EFG London Jazz Festival: Henry Threadgill's Zooid + Anthony Braxton, London, UK
98 Come, London, UK
98 Zinc And Copper: Well Tuned Brass 2022, Berlin, Germany
98 Thumbscrew, London, UK

On Site

99 Carolee Schneemann *Body Politics*

Clifford Usher (Richard & Zahn)

Soundcheck A–Z

New CDs, vinyl, downloads, streams, etc

Christine Abdelnour & Andy Moor
Unprotected Sleep
Unsounds CD/DL

Improvised recorded sessions tend to be in and out experiences, sometimes taking just a bit longer than the duration of the music that ends up on an album. Saxophonist Christine Abdelnour and guitarist Andy Moor entered a French studio in Vandoeuvre-lès-Nancy following a performance at the Musique Action Festival in 2011, but they felt the results were uneven, although they were happy with some of the material. They decided to put the project on hold until they could reconvene.

It ended up taking 11 years before the duo returned to the studio for a second session, again in France, following a concert at Les Instants Chavirés in Montreuil. 11 years can be a long time in the life of an improvisor's musical practice and evolving sound, but there's no sense of disconnect in material spanning more than a decade on *Unprotected Sleep*, whose title addresses the hypnagogic state artists sometimes work within, when a kind of altered state of consciousness can allow an individual to channel new streams of creativity unencumbered by waking reality. I can't say how it may have impacted these charged duets, but there's no missing the tightrope tension the pair generate. On each piece they build uninterrupted streams of sound, treated in ever shifting ways.

There's something almost tender in the sibilant pops and hisses Abdelnour gurgles alongside Moor's leisurely harmonics on the aptly titled "Flutter Bucket"; on "Defending The Question Marks", the saxophonist blows overtones that suggest an Aeolian harp while Moor's guitar dances around those lines, unleashing queasy chords and arpeggios. Moor generates a clanging drone on "Building Ontop Of Ourselves" woven with long tones effectively abraded by Abdelnour with a clicking effect to produce a multilayered kind of staccato. *Unprotected Sleep* is worth the wait.
Peter Margasak

Theophilus Oluwafifehami Ajayi
Destinations
Club Soda CD/DL

A wonderfully direct and plangent six track EP from Greenwich, London born and based artist Theophilus Oluwafifehami Ajayi, combining yearning vignettes from a variety of destinations including Blackpool, Liverpool and West Africa, realised through a combination of live acoustic instrumentation and synthetic textures that Ajayi seems to put together in his bedroom. I'm reminded throughout of the lushness and grit of *More Specials* but also the most heartfelt moments of Wesley Willis. It's a doozie.

Opener "Blackpool" skips forth with a delicious Afrobeat sway and sashay over which Ajayi layers end of the pier organ, synthesizer and his own uniquely wide-eyed take on the Vegas of the North West. *"It's a great town, it's a great place, it's wonderful"*, he sings, with nary a trace of irony. *"I love it, I'm enjoying it since the age of 21, fish and chips, sausage and ice cream, I hate the burgers that are going on in England"*.

There's a beautifully innocent edge to Ajayi's lyrics that often reminds me of Jonathan Richman. "I'm Calling You" is gorgeous, stripped down to acoustic guitar and voice, melodies and chords straight from the 1940s. When he sings *"Every day in your life, I'm calling you no matter where we go so far, I'll be there for you"*, your heart cracks open. "Liverpool" walks up and down some Fairport Convention-style patterns, Ajayi dreaming of moving there with his girlfriend one day, strolling on Crosby Beach and hearing *"the sound of the seagulls"* before "Destination To West Africa" returns to a wonderful pointillist highlife groove.

"NHS Heroes" is a post-punk electro-pulse replete with sloganeering vocals, warped synths and a needling PiL-like guitar before this utterly enchanting EP closes out with an acoustic version of "West Africa", in which the sky and walls of Ajayi's sound tumble to reveal a sunstruck blue open space where every line seems to gain extra light and life. You'll find yourself putting tracks from this EP on mixtapes and playlists – to the delight of friends, who'll inevitably demand to know and hear more.
Neil Kulkarni

Amefrican Grunges
Amefrican Grunges
QTV Selo DL

This debut EP from Brazilian purveyors of psychedelia Amefrican Grunges packs enough references into five tracks to fill a syllabus. From household names like Jimi Hendrix to more esoteric figures like botanist/poet Clarissa Munger Badger, the group unify these influences sonically and thematically into something that could only sprout from the confluences of culture in Brazil. Referencing UK writer Paul Gilroy in the sleevenotes, bandleader Luís Augusto also hops across the Pacific to draw from the haiku of Japanese poet Matsuo Bashō; this leap might seem a bit random until you remember Brazil has the largest diaspora of Japanese people outside of Japan.

Though this is Augusto's first release, he's no stranger to the Brazilian underground, having been featured on Ava Rocha's song "Hermética" with Negro Leo in 2015. Releasing music via QTV Selo, Amefrican Grunges find themselves in welcome company alongside local heavyweights like Juçara Marçal and Cadu Tenório.

"Basho Revisited" reworks one of the poet's famous haikus into a surrealist mantra which Augusto delivers in falsetto over a blues riff. The title track does a similar lyrical refashioning, this time with Nirvana: *"Amefrican Grunges smells like old spirits"*. Repeated over breakneck drumming from Renato Godoy and Thomas Harres, the titular refrain breaks down into a psychedelic vortex before reassembling at the end. "Be Sunshine" slows things down, beginning as a surf rock ditty before the group's affinity for the flanger takes over.

Then something surprising happens: after a bit of improvisational noodling, percussionists Pablo Carvalho and Índio da Cuíca begin laying down a tamborzão beat at the song's climax, structuring the noisy chaos with a bit of Brazilian rhythmic flair. It's in this moment that these musicians really click together to create a new sound.
James Gui

Daniel Bachman
Almanac Behind
Three Lobed CD/DL/LP

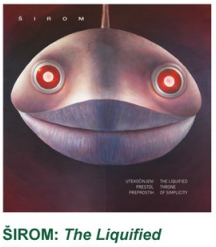
Since 1792, *The Old Farmer's Almanac* has dispensed homespun wit, home repair wisdom and weather predictions for the coming year to readers across the continental US. Whatever this common sense tome has to say about climate change, one suspects, would not be enough to bring comfort to Daniel Bachman. *Almanac Behind* accelerates his departure from the pastures of American Primitive guitar and towards an increasingly dire representation of ruin.

Bachman's previous album *Axacan* was a lengthy meditation upon the deceptions of colonialism and the damage wrought by a conquest mentality. Bachman's guitar, often distorted by cell phone recording, seemed small and forlorn next to oceanic harmonium drones and field recordings

tak:til

glitterbeat & tak:til records / 2022

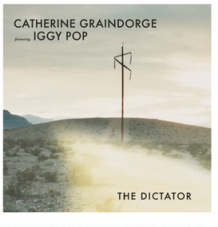
PARK JIHA: *The Gleam*



ŠIROM: *The Liquified Throne of Simplicity*

EL KHAT: *Albat Alawi Op.99*

AVALANCHE KAITO: *Avalanche Kaito*



CATHERINE GRAINDORGE featuring IGGY POP: *The Dictator*

www.glitterbeat.com / UK distribution Proper

that posited nature as an enduring presence whose resilience stands in damning contrast to humanity's poor showing. But on *Almanac Behind*, nature is done with making nice. "Barometric Cascade (Signal Collapse)" opens the record on a note of blue foreboding, its mutilated slide guitar licks collapsing in rising gusts of wind and static. In short order, emergency alert signals and weather broadcasts blow through, unleashing a carefully constructed representation of chaos.

Bachman probably spent more of *Almanac Behind*'s production time processing sounds than strumming strings. On one track, recordings of all the rivers in the state of Virginia are amalgamated into a withering blast. On another, the digital information from a photo of a wildfire is translated into a fibrillating rhythm track. When his guitar and banjo emerge, they sound broken and helpless in the face of pitiless meteorological forces.

Listeners hoping for more joyous fingerpicking in the vein of *Seven Pines* or *Orange County Serenade* will be sorely disappointed. Nowadays Bachman is like those climate activists who have taken to gluing their hands to masterpieces, except that, ever the polite Southerner, the only artwork he'll vandalise is his own gorgeous guitar tone.

Bill Meyer

Big Joanie

Back Home

Daydream Library Series/Kill Rock Stars CD/DL/LP

Big Joanie return to the forefront of the DIY punk scene four years after 2018's *Sistahs* set them off on their quietly triumphant rise. Beloved now by bands they modelled themselves after – Bikini Kill, Sleater Kinney – *Back Home* is the trio's opportunity to reassert their worth while experimenting with a wider sonic palette.

"Cactus Tree" might be the best song they've delivered to date. The track's arrangement makes it clear that the band still favour sparse and raw instrumentation, but are also ready to take it into new, more melodic places. They've spoken at length in the past about The Ronettes being one of their biggest influences, something apparent in the vocal harmonies, which feel genuinely euphoric at times.

It's a shame to hear them resort to an excessively clean sounding drum machine on "Confident Man", when Chardine Taylor-Stone's stand-up drumming is such a wonderful and unusual asset. The precision of the computer generated clicks feels at odds with the rest of their style, but with the Suicide-adjacent (if less bleak) "Count To 10" the gritty machine beats align with their rough and ready approach, mirroring Taylor-Stone's feel, resulting in one of the album's most persuasive tracks.

Big Joanie excel at speaking simple truths in a way that feels relatable and honest. *"I've compromised too many times in my life"* sings Stephanie Phillips on "In My Arms" and *"At least now I know I've tried everything"* on "Insecure", which sounds like a millennial panic attack by way of a 1960s girl group anthem.

Big Joanie have developed immeasurably since their debut and it's a joy to see them, if not quite reaching their full potential, then imparting a genuine sense of what that fulfillment might entail.

Rosie Esther Solomon

Black Metal Rainbows

Various

Black Metal Rainbows DL

Dark Side Of The Sacred Star

Various

Peaceville LP

While its endemic fascism mirrors that of monoculture, the radical merit of black metal has been demonstrably asserted by the likes of stalwart institution Peaceville, alongside contemporary efforts from the artists and writers associated with the *Black Metal Rainbows* endeavour. Celebrating their 35th anniversary, the former have issued a compilation containing many of the acts they have championed, alongside newer names like Avmakt and Hellripper, who bear the flame ignited by forebears such as Venom.

While reactionary black metal asserts fealty to tradition, Peaceville encouraged acts once relatively tarred with its brush to repent through self-overcoming, notably Sigh and Darkthrone. Sigh have come to embody a blackened avant prog recalling the likes of Cardiacs, whereas Darkthrone have honed a studio duo approach reminiscent of a devilish Steely Dan.

Given the originality herein exemplified by cult act Mortuary Drape, or the reanimation of long dormant atmospheric innovators Kvist, it is unsurprising that label founder Paul Haimshaw cites influences such as The Residents, whose "theory of obscurity" stipulates that artists should disregard all influence of potential audience. Peaceville demonstrate that auteurship need not signify callous exceptionalism, and that isolation may offer solidarity in mutual recognition of outsideness from aextant order.

Such refuge has been similarly elucidated by *Black Metal Rainbows*, an endeavour launched from an essential book of radical perspectives framing the subculture not only in the aforementioned light, but as a battleground for self-determination. Modernist luminaries such as Jute Gyte, Krallice, Mare Cognitum and Spectral Lore take the fight to contemporary moral panic, contributing to a fundraiser compilation supporting queer youth targeted by repressive legislation and stochastic terrorism.

The cause itself should be sufficient, but of particular note is the inclusion of the explicitly political scene emerging from contemporary Britain, including the likes of Dawn Ray'd, Ashenspire and Tyrannus, with the latter's standout "Break The Will Of Evil" invoking the spirit of acts borne from 1980s Tory incompetency like Bolt Thrower and Carcass. Artists challenging the musical orthodoxy of black metal are a welcome inclusion, such as the industrial hypnogogia of Penance Stare and the necrobotic cybergrind of Gonemage illustrate.

Similarly pleasing contributions include the radical dadaism of fellow traveller Merzbow, a surf rock rendition of "Transilvanian Hunger" attributed to The Darkthrones, and a closing cover of Judas Priest's "Turbo Lover" by The Lion's Daughter – an act who exemplify the freedom from distinction that the reclamation of the term queer has come to signify.

Sealing the compilation with a tribute to queer metal icon Rob Halford indicates the 'trve' warmth at the core of a frostbitten exterior. In the words of the Metal God himself: *"I'm made of metal/My circuits gleam"*.

Helena Celle

The Brother Moves On

$/He Who Feeds You… Owns You

Native Rebel CD/DL/LP

South African septet The Brother Moves On are led by vocalist Siyabonga Mthembu, who also works with Shabaka & The Ancestors. The band are named after The Brother Mouzone, a character from US TV drama *The Wire*. If The Ancestors are musical radicals, The Brother – as on 2021's *Tolika Mtoliki* – explore more traditional protest music. "We can bring the funk along with the ballads," they comment. "Johannesburg is in our veins as migrant workers." Here they refer to the apartheid economic system of control and oppression.

Their new album is named after a speech given to the Organisation of African Unity by revolutionary pan-Africanist Thomas Sankara, the Burkino Faso President who was assassinated in 1987. "It has a lot to do with food sovereignty and land – whoever feeds you, whoever owns your food system runs you," explains Mthembu. Recorded in Pretoria and Centurion, the album was produced by Shabaka Hutchings, who appears on flute and clarinet. Arrangements are by multi-instrumentalist Malcolm Jiyane.

The music looks back to the 1970s and 80s, to the undulating grooves and impassioned vocals of Afro-fusionists Stimela, and the expressive flute and rolling bass of Philip Tabane and Malombo. "Itumeleng Revisited" is a cover of the 70s hit by Soweto band Batsumi, with electric piano shimmering beneath contrapuntal flute and saxophone – a gorgeously lazy, hazy modal vamp. "Bayakhala", also released as a single, is built on a classic mbaqanga guitar riff. Mthembu's piercing vocals lament the country's state – the title means "They are crying" in Zulu. Hutchings is eloquent on flute, Mthunzi Mvubu plays searing alto, while Muhammad Dawjee (tenor saxophone) and Malcolm Jiyane (trombone) have inexhaustible drive. "Sphila", with bellicose opening drums, is suffused with liberation rhetoric.

The affecting "Puleng", featuring Mvubu's coruscating alto saxophone, celebrates the rain and laments the disruption of migrant work. The traditional funeral celebration "Hamba" begins with plangent a cappella singing, before a guitar-led vamp locks in. "Mazel" is a plaintive lament that addresses continued post-apartheid suffering – yet as so often in South African culture, the music expresses hope.

Andy Hamilton

Christeene

Midnite Fukk Train

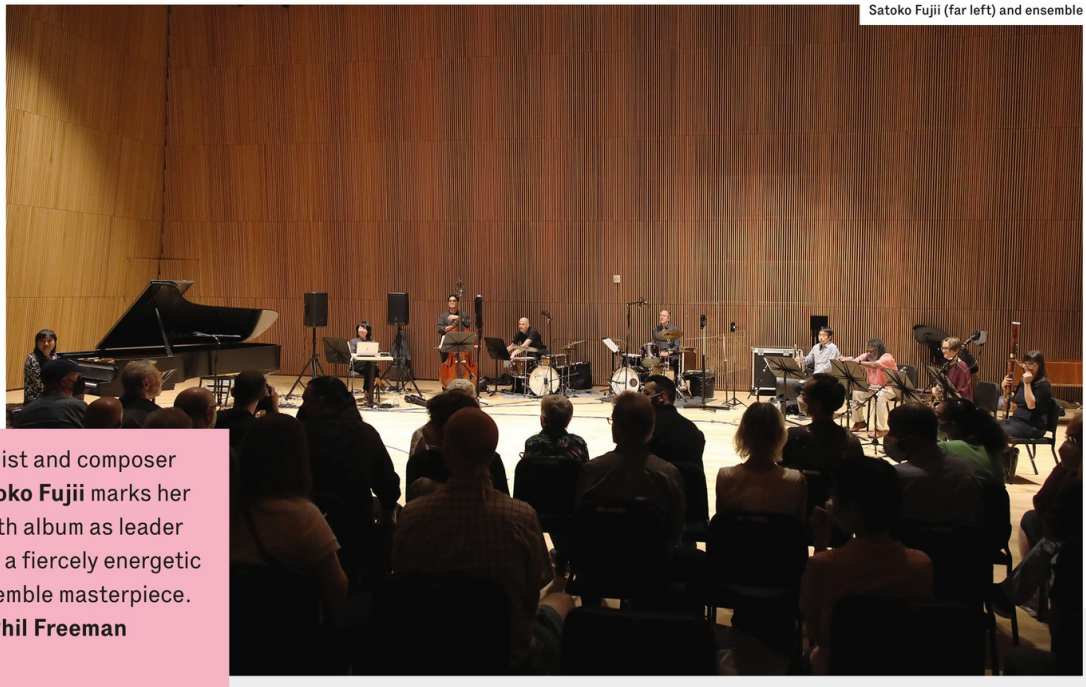
Spaceflight DL/LP

"A is for abortion!/B is for Black Lives Matter!/C is for cunts!/D is for dicks!", drawls performance polymath Christeene on "Alphabets", something of a state of the union address for a queer alternative America. It makes for a confrontational opening track that chimes with her public persona – but is otherwise a misleading introduction to her third album, which is her most cohesive but also least combative so far.

Those who recognise Christeene as a transgressive underground personality may be surprised that her recorded music is often quite removed from her hell-wrought live performances, blood and shit stained photoshoots and press interviews. Both 2012's *Waste Up, Kneez Down* and 2018's *Basura* mixed horrorcore moments with light 'n' trashy takes on electroclash and contemporaneous pop trends. Though intimidatingly titled, *Midnite Fukk Train* is similarly (relatively) easy on the ear.

An early highlight is "Beaucoup Morocco", an energetic squeal of glam garage rock that imagines *Hedwig & The Angry Inch* performed by James Chance. Here we're introduced to the dual protagonists of the album, Christeene's familiar raspy growl and the omnipresent, characterful voice of a saxophone, ranging from jumpy no wave blasts to "Young Americans" soulfulness. It's an intriguing constant, and points to the overall level-up in sophistication, production wise. "Gutt It" is similarly fun bubblegum punk, but by "I Want It All" this mode is running out of steam.

Probably most surprising of all is the cabaret ballad "Piano Song". Stylised as a melodramatic torch song with a vengeance theme, it has the potential to be interesting, but instead it exposes the shortcomings in Christeene's unadorned voice, and her unfortunate self-serious theatre kid tendencies. Much better – and much less corny – is "Lo Paid Runway Model" – another slow song, but this time injected with Bowie/Yves Tumor-esque swagger. The final track is a rework of 2012's "Fix My Dik" – a maximalist blast



Satoko Fujii (far left) and ensemble

Pianist and composer **Satoko Fujii** marks her 100th album as leader with a fiercely energetic ensemble masterpiece. By **Phil Freeman**

Satoko Fujii
Hyaku: One Hundred Dreams
Libra CD/DL

Pianist Satoko Fujii maintains a relatively low profile, but in terms of sheer output she's one of the most creative jazz musicians around. Her discography sits comfortably alongside those of David Murray, Anthony Braxton, Ivo Perelman, Matthew Shipp and other players who can't seem to stop making music. Solo and in partnership with her husband, trumpeter Natsuki Tamura, she has now made 100 albums under her own name, and appeared on dozens of others, either his or in groups they've established (some one-off and others long running) like Junk Box, Gato Libre, Kaze, Kira Kira, This Is It! and Mahobin.

Fujii debuted as a leader with *Something About Water*, a 1996 album of two-piano duos with Paul Bley. It was the first release on Libra, the label she and Tamura run, and was followed by the solo piano disc *Indication* and *How Many?*, a collection of trumpet-piano duos. In the 25 years since, she has recorded with a trio featuring bassist Mark Dresser and drummer Jim Black; a raucous quartet that includes drummer Tatsuya Yoshida; a sextet; and in duo contexts (sometimes with Yoshida, once with fellow pianist Myra Melford, and often with Tamura). She also composes frequently for jazz orchestra, maintaining a New York Orchestra and another in Tokyo, and once assembling one in Berlin; more than 20 of her albums are large ensemble works.

Her music ranges from conventional-ish jazz to free improvisation to electrified fusion that verges on hard rock to pieces of incredible delicacy. On *Gato Libre*, she plays accordion. She frequently marks milestones in her own life with a torrent of musical activity – when she turned 50, she released six CDs in a single year, and when she turned 60 in 2018, she doubled it, putting out a disc a month all year. In 2006, she released four big band albums simultaneously, each with a different ensemble.

Hyaku (the Japanese word for 100) features a new all-star nine member group. Ikue Mori and Wadada Leo Smith first played with Fujii and Tamura on *Aspiration*, released in 2017, and Mori has appeared on several more of her releases. But tenorist Ingrid Laubrock, bassoonist Sara Schoenbeck, bassist Brandon Lopez, and drummers Tom Rainey and Chris Corsano are first time collaborators. *Hyaku* documents a live performance at the DiMenna Center in New York on 20 September 2022, but whatever audience was present is either silent throughout, or were not recorded.

The hour-long piece, divided into five movements on CD but continuous in performance, begins with solo piano. Fujii's playing is gentle and almost romantic, and gradually Mori's laptop and electronics come in behind her, like chirping birds and humming insects. Rainey and Corsano are next to join, brushing and softly whapping their kits, then Lopez arrives, his bass massive and booming at first, and then an infinitely slow, cello-like drone. Fujii's playing gets more intense, rumbling the keyboard with Cecil Taylor-esque low end and classical precision even as she leaps catlike up and down the keyboard, and even moves inside to pluck and zing the strings.

The entire ensemble are almost never heard all together; instead, Fujii grants each of the players solo space, and the first one to step out immediately sets the piece apart from almost any other avant jazz work of its kind. The bassoon is an unmistakable, timbrally unique instrument, and Sara Schoenbeck is one of its best-known players in avant garde or out jazz contexts. Her solo here is like a tree singing you a lullaby. After a swelling, glorious rubato ensemble passage, Smith, a master of unaccompanied trumpet, takes the spotlight, his piercing tone launching notes through the air like diamond-tipped darts. When Tamura and Mori join him, the sound becomes a cloud of extended hisses, electronic squiggles and sputtering lip-farts, with occasional punctuation from bass, bassoon and drums. Fujii seems entirely absent; perhaps she was conducting?

Towards the end of the second movement, Lopez takes a bowed solo that extends notes and frequencies so radically it sounds like he's trying to saw through the strings, if not the instrument's body, but he does so with infinite patience and slowness. It's beautiful, but almost frightening; these are the thumps and groans of horror movie soundtracks. When Laubrock finally appears at the beginning of the third movement, things get truly jazzy for the first time. The two drummers play free time behind her, but her own lines have a gritty post-bop feel. Gradually, the other wind players enter by ones and twos, and the trade-offs between them have the feel of a concerto drawn from Charles Mingus – but then Mori returns to disrupt it all, at the piece's exact midpoint, with an eruption of Autechre-esque electronics and Corsano (I'd bet) rattling and bashing away behind her.

As the music winds down, a beautiful unison melody is played, Smith and Tamura's trumpets soaring and the ensemble swelling behind them, but that only lasts a moment – it's supplanted by a drum interlude and some sputtering, hissing displays of extended technique from the horns before it all dissolves gradually into silence.

Satoko Fujii's catalogue is a largely undiscovered country, but this 100th release in particular is a masterpiece. Start here and work backwards. ☐

Eva Kapanadze

closing an album which has exciting moments, but is too tame too often to be essential as a whole.
Claire Biddles

Clap. An Anatomy Of Applause
Various
Unsounds 2×LP
Striking the hands together to indicate satisfaction is a curious thing, all the more so when the same sound can indicate violence or peremptory command. The kids at my daughter's deaf school wave their hands in the air, which proves rather lulling. I'm usually more of a stamper and whistler when roused.

Clap. An Anatomy Of Applause is a fascinating anthology of sound projects that makes use of appreciation and ovation as sound sources and inspiration. Sometimes, as in Eraldo Bernocchi's "The Solitude Of Pens", it's very hard to hear a connection that can only be inferred through title and context. It's more obvious in label founder Andy Moor's "Perseverance" where the archive sources are much closer to the surface.

One half expects some recall of Steve Reich's *Clapping Music* but the pieces here mostly tend to the maximal, with Moor Mother's "Clap Piece" positively thunderous, while Pupillo's "In Memory Of Punk Rock" – didn't the punks invent a sticky new way of showing appreciation? – sounds like church bells proclaiming liberation. Likewise Scanner's "The Fall, The Freedom", whose sculpted drones may well derive from human sounds but have passed far beyond them.

Of the remainder, only Ji Youn Kang's "27 April 2018", which presumably refers to the meeting of Moon Jae-in and Kim Jong-un that 'ended' the Korean War after 68 years, seems tied to an event where applause might be called for. One minor quibble with the project is that most of the results sound quite distant from the core concept, possibly deliberately so.

While it's hard not to applaud the mutual effort and many of the results, perhaps a more literal approach might have been more telling. Is there a more exciting moment in modern music than the massed voices at the start of Weather Report's "Nubian Sundance", or a more irritating one than the crowd applauding itself on every live Sinatra album you've bought and regretted? Literal isn't always dull or uncreative.
Brian Morton

Alvin Curran
Drumming Up Trouble
Black Truffle DL/LP
Everyone wants an origin story. Jazz is full of them: Mingus's *Pithecanthropus Erectus*, Duke Ellington's slightly creepy "drum is a woman" stuff, more nakedly anthropological ideas like John Surman and Stu Martin's notion that all music began with a scream and a punch, Meredith Monk's gentler experiments with the origins of community language. Alvin Curran's radical improvisation group MEV sometimes sounded like a tribe that had lost its drummer – as one sceptical critic put it – or an Art Ensemble without Don Moye. Yet the group in its early years was explicitly concerned, as Curran has recently stated, with getting back to music's origin point, or further still, to a moment where music hadn't been thought about yet.

In a unique compilation of unreleased materials, Black Truffle has assembled work from 2018–21 in which Curran experiments, not with live instruments but with archived hiphop samples and synthesized percussion. It's a wild ride, thrown together with few discernible principles of order or desire to communicate, but done virtuosically in real time. Contrasted with these is "Field It More" – a weird funk riff played on a busted piano, with drum machine, spoken vocal overdubs and a blues played on top. It's beyond strange, like something from the tape library of some future hominid archaeologist stumbling into a dusty studio and pushing buttons without a notion what they were for.

Further contrast is provided by two minimalist – all the stuff above is exuberantly maximal – compositions for processed percussion. "Rollings" takes a basic snare pattern and pulls it out and out and out until it's barely there any more. "End Zone" has tones from an orchestral gran cassa put through shimmery oscillations, like a dub remix of an Eddie Prévost tam-tam piece.

They're beautiful, these pieces, but they are for the concert hall. The wilder improvs conjure up everything from *The Rite Of Spring* to Baby Dodds in New Orleans to a glitching drum machine at an edgy rent party that's just been crashed by the block next door. It's the kind of music that makes you want to go out and chuck a bone into the air, and see if it turns into a spaceship.
Brian Morton

The Dowling Poole
Refuse
369 CD/DL
Kitten Pyramid
Kiddo
FlipFlop CD/DL/LP
I Know I'm An Alien
My Neighbours They Suck
Bumpy DL/MC
Perhaps it's a case of cultural pareidolia but I swear the influence of prog pop eccentrics Cardiacs is finally gaining traction within certain sectors of the British musical landscape. The unexpected – to me, anyway – success of Black Midi with their convoluted arrangements and vaudevillian tendencies offers one clue; further evidence is provided by the likes of The Dowling Poole, Kitten Pyramid and I Know I'm An Alien – all of whom make something recognisable as guitar based pop but which is deranged by inventive approaches to song structure and avoidance of stock subject matter.

The Dowling Poole's *Refuse* is a particular triumph. A collection of tracks previously only available digitally and for a limited time, coralled onto a physical format at the behest of the London duo's fans, it serves as a remarkably coherent showcase for their capabilities. Across 11 songs – none of which could be considered filler – Willie Dowling and Jon Poole bring to mind the frantic, effervescent creativity of Cardiacs but also the rigorous, complex songcraft of new wave riders such as XTC, Squeeze and Split Enz. The lyrical bent however is far more acrid and politically direct than any of those outfits. *"For those that profess that the market knows best then escape in the blink of an eye/Fuck you goodbye"*, they spit on "Fuck You Goodbye" over a folkish strum. The standout is "White Light" – a hulking great behemoth of a tune with slamming Bonhamesque drums and a glorious choral middle eight.

The third album from Burton-on-Trent's Kitten Pyramid is looser and more sprawling than *Refuse*, its lyricism more oblique. Lines like *"I'm a fucking idiot/You're a fucking idiot/We're all fucking idiots/Idiots, idiots"* ("Idiot") and *"Holy shit/We've got a fucking Nandos"* ("Nandos") communicate the sense of a world toppling off its rocker in subtle, mundane ways. They pack a lot into 37 minutes – chamber pop, pseudo-metal, squonking synths, spoken word and a song about the BBC that borrows liberally from Cream's "Sunshine Of Your Love" – but it all feels necessary to the plot.

Kitten Pyramid's music has some of the slurp and squiggle of US avant pop pioneers Ween. The same applies to London's I Know I'm An Alien, the most lo-fi and challenging of these outfits. Pitch-shifted vocals squirt all over junkshop electronics, itchy-scratchy guitar riffs, cheeky samples and oddly suave beats, each element seeming to subvert the others, resulting in a sound as initially bewildering to outsiders as Cardiacs, Renaldo & The Loaf and Position Normal but whose logic likewise becomes clearer following a period of immersion. As with The Dowling Poole, there's an anger – a terror, even – underpinning everything here. This is especially evident on "You Can Pay The Rent", "Ignorant Boss" and "Capitalism Wants Me Dead".

All three albums demand a considerable degree of involvement on the listener's part. The payoff comes in the form of some of the most captivating avant pop currently in circulation plus a modified – and not at all flattering – perspective on British life. Late Cardiacs leader Tim Smith would be proud, I think.
Joseph Stannard

FaUSt featuring Keiji Haino
This Is The Right Path
Old Heaven Books CD/DL/2×LP+CD
This release is a live recording from the 2016 edition of Tomorrow Festival in Shenzhen, China, when FaUSt were joined on stage by Japanese underground music hero Keiji Haino for a one-off performance. FaUSt are in trio formation here, with Jean-Hervé Péron on vocals, bass and assortments, Werner 'Zappi' Diermaier on drums, and tour regular Maxime Manac'h on keyboards and gas cylinders. There's also a pair of Chinese women knitting on stage alongside a giant cement mixer.

Haino provides edgy glamour with additional electric guitars, guttural vocals and mysterious noises, integrating fully with the band's freewheeling kosmische excursions, and adding muscle to FaUSt's pounding rock jams. After an opening prelude of guitar sirens and Haino's gargled vocal drones, the set kicks off with the noisy strut of "Air Pur", a track otherwise known as "Fresh Air". Its chaotic groove eventually settles into a satisfyingly heavy jam with Péron and Haino screaming *"FRESH AIR!"* at each other like two dudes with road rage at an intersection. Across the nine minutes of "AHOUM!" – a version of 1972 track "It's A Rainy Day (Sunshine Girl)" – incessant tom-tom rhythms build to a thudding dirge, with a mix so heavy (courtesy of producer Tu Fei) I genuinely worry my speakers won't survive it.

"Ecoute" shifts the tone to a dreamier, more psychedelic space – delayed acoustic guitar figures are punctuated by gigantic drum hits, with tinkling bells and hurdy-gurdy adding cozy magic, while the highlight here is the 17 minute epic "La Mer" (aka "Listen To The Fish" from 1995's *Rien*, on which Haino also guested). Overall, most impressive is the way these musicians confidently grasp the expressive reins of these longform pieces, making *This Is The Right Path* a consistently enjoyable and immersive listen.
Leah Kardos

Fragility Of Sounds
Various
Ventil DL
We talk about peace being fragile, or mental health, or finely wrought glass. In 2018, Robin DiAngelo explored racial privilege in her study *White Fragility* – identifying the guilt and distress whites experience when confronted with their own cultural domination. But sounds? Even in the cork-lined corridors of the New Quiet, sound was seen as somehow unbreakable, however low went the dials.

The music collected here was all made under the auspices of a similarly titled artistic research project based at the Centre of Gender Studies at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Graz and directed by composer and performer Pia Palme in collaboration with musicologist Christina Fischer-Lessiak. Participating musicians included Electric Indigo, Elaine Mitchener, Elisabeth Schimana and Séverine Ballon. Projects of this kind inevitably have credits longer than a Pixar film. Equally, given that the project ran from 2019–21, all the usual Covid era qualifiers and exemptions also apply, adding another

Wave rider: Klein

Klein
Star In The Hood
Parkwuud DL
Cave In The Wind
Parkwuud DL/MC

Just over a year ago, Klein – that is, Zoe Bell – told *The Wire*'s Abi Bliss about her working patterns. Sometimes music would arrive in a "waves", she said, with more than 100 tracks in a week; at other times, the practice would go quiet, fold in on itself, as the gestating process began for new work.

The two albums *Cave In The Wind* and *Star In The Hood* both belong to the former category, their releases coming within weeks of each other. And, while constructed in much the same way as her other works – 2021's *Harmattan*, for example – they are also markedly different. Made up of four tracks, with only one of them less than nine minutes in length, *Cave In The Wind* is a tensely shaded album whose fractured, collaged music reflects things falling apart. *Star In The Hood*, on the other hand, is a 14 tracker, which means that it's not exactly a breeze (Klein's sonic colours are too complex for that) and each section is a single statement in a larger collage rather than a composition that develops over longer durations.

"Faith In A Minor" kicks off *Cave In The Wind* and, at a shade under 30 minutes in length, it has much to say. Klein's mode of working involves staccato electronics, juddering samples and, quite often, a base layer of drone that can act as a carrier to take her from one section to another. Vocals, especially her vocals, are obscured by this process, an interesting strategy that suggests that Klein is really creating meaning by the curatorial placement of her collages. The first few minutes of "Faith" are spent in a digital stutter. A voice is saying *"air"* but what comes after that word is hard to discern: it's more like a series of fricatives, of pshhtttts and puffs.

This inability to speak is heightened as the track develops, with Klein spinning a dial through US news stations and their breaking news of the Supreme Court's reversal of the Roe versus Wade decision earlier this year. What is to be said? So much that, for those first moments, it's impossible to articulate a rage, a fury, a despair at this. Klein ditches the glitch and goes for some slowly progressing chords that shape themselves, unmistakably so, into sirens before, several iterations later, we are in a scrumble of rapidly changing sounds.

Klein's drone layers are very much a method of transport for her material. On "Top Shotta" she moves us, briefly into an anteroom where sketches are played, briefly, on a piano; on "Saving Grace", the natural world, or at least electronic facsimiles of it, intrude. There is a wariness, but none of the rib-crushing pressure of the opening track. The closing "Never Die" offers a dreamy organ line, snatches of melismatic vocals, a sensation of breath (and the fear of its loss), even as we hear, away in the distance, the sounds of crowds, of police cars and feel fear.

Star In The Hood is recognisable Kleinland. Fast edits, treated and cut-up voices, passages of instrumentation offered and snatched away. Sometimes, there is huge intimacy: "Winter", for example is 51 seconds of Klein singing a riff (*"Wintertime is here"*) to a guitar as a soundscape takes over. There is an unguarded quality that makes the listening of it akin to eavesdropping. Snatches of conversation – from family situations or taken from phone calls – run through "Mommy's Girl".

There's laughter, it's fun time, until we are shifted into a zone of uncertain space again: the keyboard notes, heard earlier, break down, a reverb is turned up, a granular, electronic sound takes over. Of all the pieces here "Black Star" is possibly the quietest in terms of electronic interventions. A gentle piano riff repeats over, and over as little whirrs and sped-up sounds whizz past. If Klein is pointing to the singularities of time, reminding us of nuance, of attention spans, it's no bad thing.

Louise Gray

– presumably unintended – level to the concept of human, if not sonic fragility.

Electric Indigo – aka Susanne Kirchmayr – went down a purely electronic route. "Brittle" opens on a susurrus that could be rain, corn, dry leaves or just the rustle of blood and synapses. It evolves, of course, into a more detailed soundspace, but one that leaves the listener strangely off-balance and insecure. Almost all the other pieces are performed by Schallfeld Ensemble members. Palme's own contributions mostly concentrate on premodern instruments – harpsichord on "Kreidebleich", bass recorder on "More Radically" and "Weiterung", oboe da caccia on "Eins & Doppelt" – instruments whose intonation and projection are, well, fragile by our present standards. Very beautiful and mysterious they are too.

The pattering detail of Elaine Mitchener's "Owner's Manual" is presented in two iterations, "Form" and "Free", but Lord knows how a chamber ensemble makes and controls those sounds. Elisabeth Schimana's "Virus #3.5 Schatten" may be the only piece that makes indirect reference to the pandemic, a moment in history, let's remember, when humanity came under the command of an entity one ten thousandth the size of this full stop. How to convey that in music? With extreme delicacy of touch, in this case, and no easily dramatic Schrei effects.

But what's the most fragile human state one can imagine? Not insanity, not critical illness, not shaky ceasefire, but the precise moment before sleep. That's where Séverine Ballon's "Au Travers Des Paupières Closes" resides, its sounds brushing across closed eyelids. A word of caution, though: these lovely pieces come with a considerable freight of research and, though intensely enjoyable as a pure audio experience, are probably inseparable from it.

Brian Morton

Klein

Ben Frost
Broken Spectre
Vinyl Factory DL/2×LP
1899 (Original Music From The Netflix Series)
Lakeshore/Invada DL
Two soundtracks from Australian-Icelandic composer Ben Frost. Three years in the making, *Broken Spectre* is part of a collaborative project with documentary artists Richard Mosse and Trevor Tweeten exploring the effects of climate change and deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon. Frost's score is minimal and remarkably restrained, constructed almost entirely from a set of location recordings from the region. Recording to analogue tape, high frequency forest sounds are slowed to a lower pitch, revealing the almost musical chatter of insects, bats and birds.

From the opening "Report From An Obscure Planet", Frost seems to simply let the forest speak. His hand is almost undetectable as insect ambiences and bird calls begin to blur and bleed into a vast field of captivating noise. The animal voices in "The Burning World" carry disquieting emotional weight, a sad cry that repeats against crackling fire and ominously throbbing synth tones. The composer conjures potent terror from caustic drones in "The Index", and flexes his sci-fi horror muscles on "A Guide To Virtual Death", probably the most Netflix sounding production on the album. The most affecting moments however are when there's barely anything happening, as on the diminishing birdsong counterpoint of "Low Flying Aircraft" and the resigned sadness of "Cry Hope, Cry Fury".

1899 is a sci-fi mystery currently streaming on Netflix, created by Baran bo Odar and Jantje Friese, who worked with Frost previously on German TV series *Dark*. Frost's soundtrack is foreboding, scattered with temporal glitches, corrosive ambiences, volatile tribal percussion and surges of distortion. The pulverised industrial crush of "Kapitan" is fantastically menacing, as is the monstrous vocal performance of "Wirus Się Rozprzestrzenia" – which I suspect is from Lyra Pramuk, who is listed in the general credits.

The music dips into the 20th century horror zone, with the strings of "Djævlen Kalder På Dem" sounding like Bernard Herrmann's *Psycho* shower scene cue played at half speed. Unexpected highlights include two songs co-written and performed by Irish folk singer Radie Peat of Lankum whose naked, cascading voice sounds especially haunting on "At Hjælpe Hendes Sjæl På Vej".
Leah Kardos

Ghoëst
Demo Compilation 1 (I-XII)
Ancient Meadow DL/2×MC
One of the more commonplace gripes among contemporary musicians concerns categorisation: that is, being perceived, labelled or described in terms considered limiting. Thus the recent sloganeering among artists and labels as no genre, all genres, post-everything, etc. Yet allegiance to a sound can be just as powerful as evading one. Sweden dungeon synth entity Ghoëst offers an intriguing case study in the potential profundity of great sameness.

The rules of the project, helmed by an anonymous musician out from the city of Växjö, are strict: tracks numbered in Roman numerals followed by alliterative 'S' phrases (eg "Demo III: By Solitude Spellbound", "Demo VII: Over Strongholds Snowbound", "Demo VIII: Towards Silver Smoke"); artwork of medieval ruins photocopied on crumpled coloured paper; a metronomic drum machine, pitched through vaulted hall reverb, marching across endless steppes of grim, frostbitten keyboards. The songs are grand, greyscale, windswept – and interchangeable. But the stringency of their parameters has a cumulatively transformative effect. Each song begins and ends the same, devoid of landmarks with which to measure one's passing.

Like being lost in a snowy hedge maze, a sense of vertigo accrues, time distorts and scale becomes surreal. Various configurations of magisterial, minor key melodies enter and exit the mix, but the uniformity of their palette renders them indistinguishable, like vague structures glimpsed in a deepening dusk. It's music as monastic order, unwaveringly devoted to its own purgatorial ritual.

The title of *Demo Compilation 1 (I–XII)* is only half accurate – these are clearly not works in progress, but finished, finessed compositions. Self-released on Bandcamp as individual tracks across the past year, Kentucky imprint Ancient Meadow's new double cassette is a welcome compendium of Ghoëst's output to date. Given Växjö's war and fire-ravaged history (the city was burned in 1277, 1516, 1570, 1612, 1658, 1690, 1749, 1753, 1799, 1838 and 1843), the artist surely will not lack for ruins for future cover designs. In spite of the collection's unwavering palette and daunting 180 minute duration, there's still a sense that this is ultimately only an excerpt of some vaster, abyssal hymn, doomed to plod forever towards a vanishing horizon.
Britt Brown

Melvin Gibbs
Anamibia Sessions 1: The Wave
Editions Mego DL/LP
I've been cocking an ear Melvin Gibbs's way ever since I first heard him playing bass in The (Henry) Rollins Band in the mid-1990s – he's a fascinating player but also a vital catalyst in bringing likeminded loons together, and I've found his work – particularly of late with Harriet Tubman Band – consistently engrossing. Even for those familiar with Gibbs, *Anamibia Sessions* will be a total surprise: behind the scenes Gibbs, solo, has been crafting sound design and soundtracks for films by Arthur Jafa, and the pieces collated here, from his work for Jafa's 2020 project *The Wave* (which later became *AGHDRA*) provide the first insight into these crepuscular "bass-forward coagulants" (as Gibbs describes them) of sound. The pieces are entirely electronic and quite unlike anything heard before from Gibbs.

Although that's not quite right. I'm reminded of those moments in Miles Davis's 1970s output where he'd lean on keys and summon drones, clicking drum patterns and strange refracted space. "Future Blues" maps out pulverulent itches of sound reminiscent of Iannis Xenakis's *Concret Ph*, shifting peripheries of shadowy texture, before "Ibo Code" brings in the low end, a solemn thump that absolutely refuses – like every other element – to take centre ground. That's the unsettling thing about this music: it's not intended for performance and continually plays games with our listening habits of foregrounding and focus.

"Inner Chamber" and "Light Absorption" are almost like Gibbs's heaviest band compositions, but fed through a sonic translation device until it becomes a collage of infernally brown note adjacent crossfades, and the closer "Vibro" is like Miles's "Rated X" reconfigured in purely electronic negative. Less music, more a contemplative space in sound. Gibbs can't help remaining a fascinating artist. Hoping for more of this.
Neil Kulkarni

Ryoji Ikeda
Ultratronics
Noton CD/DL
It's been a decade since 2013's *Supercodex* – Paris/Kyoto based electronics mangler Ryoji Ikeda's last album for Raster-Noton before the label split into two entities. This new collection features audio material recorded between 1989–99 as well as compositions created between 2013–22.

Each track here just gets a number, so it's fun figuring out which pieces are from that early period and which have been crafted more recently. But as the collection unfolds it's increasingly difficult to give the record a definitive chronological shape. This hints at both the forward-facing futurism of the music in general, and the recurrent sounds that Ikeda clearly takes pleasure in exploring.

Like all the Noton releases that have absorbed me – I'm thinking particularly of Alva Noto's work in collaboration with Ryuichi Sakamoto – the sounds here are so detailed and precise, I feel the need to issue instructions for use. Truth be told, the character of the music shifts in each different listening scenario. On headphones the lunging sudden stabs of low end and rubbery textures can be hugely disorienting, particularly when they refuse to tether themselves to a groove, simultaneously rendering the listener's consciousness a prismatic mess, and placing in doubt their ability to function in transit, be it walking or bussing or on the train. Through big speakers you can almost hear your system thank you for the workout, and when melody and recognisable rhythm start seeping in circa "04", you realise just how much Ikeda has been informed by the darker end of EBM and underground techno, as well as the gratifyingly hydraulic feel of the best sci-fi soundtracks.

Ikeda posits an exploratory fusion of the danceable and non-danceable that's always absorbing, humorous and precision manufactured for maximal enjoyment. The test disc of your dreams.
Neil Kulkarni

Imaginary Landscapes
Various
99CHANTS DL/2×LP
This ambient compilation draws on the talents of KMRU, Yu Su, Kareem Lotfy, Hadj Sameer and others, benefitting non-profit organisation One Tree Planted. Each artist has provided their own take on the concept of the imaginary landscape, the resulting record ranging from drone and modular synthesis to Carnatic singing and field recordings.

KMRU's "Temporal Frame" begins the record with electronic glitch and warble, a chorus of computerised birdsong floating above a base of ambient synths, as if imagining a world in which the digital has taken on the properties of the organic. That image is perhaps the inverse of the one presented in Yu Su's "Oltre", which includes actual birdsong recordings put through a wash of filters. These natural sounds have not been fully replaced by their synthesized counterparts, instead, they are weathered by electronic processing as digital sounds swell and take centre stage.

The rest of the record explores this tension between man, machine and ecosystem. Biophony, whose moniker recalls Bernie Krause's soundscape ecology, combines impressionistic piano with droning horns and synths in "Waldhorn Choir", the track's title imbuing these disembodied analogue sounds with humanity. 99CHANTS founder David August's two collaborations feature vocals from Cansu Tanrikulu (Aşa's "Su") and Sushma Soma (Madrā's "Asarīri | அசரீரி") – haunting the former with ghostly glitch and melting the latter into air via reverb. Each imaginary landscape is a combination of human, technological and natural elements in different proportions, yielding a surprisingly diverse range of sounds.

One might have hoped that the label's engagement with environmental issues would have been as imaginative as these soundscapes. That the record supports the restoration of mangroves in India – a noble cause – by directing money to the non-profit industrial complex feels incommensurate with the musical creativity on display.
James Gui

Philip Jeck
Resistenza
Touch DL
It feels more appropriate than ever to avoid the word elegiac with Philip Jeck's first posthumous album, released on what would have been his 70th birthday. It always seemed a bit pat while he was alive, borderline crass with his afterimage yet unfaded. But fading afterimages of lost things were somewhat his métier – along with the poetics of surface. *Resistenza* calls the latter to mind, but it invites reflection on any facet of Jeck's quiet, profound and abiding influence.

Jeck's multimedia projects reflected his fine art background. See *Vinyl Requiem*, a semi-automated scratch orchestra of up to 180 rescued Dansette turntables playing locked 12"s, addressing obsolescence, kinetic sculpture, the archive, the found object or readymade, etc. But his albums were arguably more analogous to painting. A few brittle millimetres of deteriorated plastic could convey pristine shallowness or unfathomable depth, or both, depending on technique. The caveat being that said technique recognises the material's prevailing tendency to do whatever it wants, regardless of dexterity.

Resistenza features a 35 minute piece live recording from Turin, Italy in 2018. At its most touch sensitive for roughly the first quarter, its cascading patinas of tiny reverberating nicks accrue around a minimal harmonic progression. More dilated flaring sound is introduced methodically, as though feeding into a sonic loom. Subaquatic impressions ascend, stretched guitar picking teeters and heartsick strings swell, while maintaining the perfect lightness and tactility of something on or immediately below a surface.

The second piece, titled "The Long Wave" and recorded at Liverpool Philharmonic in collaboration with pianist and composer Jonathan Raisin, is harder to square with Jeck's oeuvre than the first. By necessity, he seems to forfeit his signature permeability, shoring up against the depth and resonance of Raisin's piano, just so the piece doesn't sound like a gale force wind conversing with a spiderweb. It's a polite and considered exchange, but on somewhat compromised terms.
James Gormley

Low Res
Marvin Gaye's Trouble Man
S'plat DL/LP
In the early 1970s some of the best soul/funk albums doubled as soundtracks

Slumberland featuring Sainkho Namtchylak
Lightkeeper
Morphine DL/LP
Marc Urselli's SteppenDoom
SteppenDoom
Magnetic Eye CD+Hbk/DL/LP+7"+Hbk
Here's a pair of contemporary vocal-led drone releases, one serving as the perfect opportunity for metalheads in particular to extend their taste for heaviosity into more esoteric realms, the other offering a deeper, more profound excursion for those prepared to take the next step.

New York/London based audio engineer, composer and multi-instrumentalist Marc Urselli has three Grammy awards under his belt, and all the contacts that accompany such accolades. So it's unsurprising that *SteppenDoom* features not only some of the best known mavericks in the world of metal – Matt Pike (Sleep/High On Fire) and Steve Von Till (Neurosis) among them – but also Canadian Inuk vocalist Tanya Tagaq, Russia's Alash Ensemble, Yat-Kha's Albert Kuvezin and other masters of throat singing. The album is a meeting of minds between the world's slowest and lowest, largely working as an enjoyable, psychedelic gap-bridger between two forms.

The aim is certainly not moderation here. "Tamag And Ocmah" will sound familiar to those versed in doom and with the throat singing over the top, the bottom end is even thicker than usual. A few tracks in, the recipe of doom metal plus throat singer begins to feel a little formulaic, so when "Imdugud In Shambhala" introduces some traditional percussion, it's a welcome development.

SteppenDoom pushes all of its elements to the extreme. Throat singing could be considered the logical conclusion to what metal growls have become, with this album advancing a convincing argument that the technique is, in effect, more metal than Western attempts at vocal extremity will ever be. The contributing vocalists are exceptionally evocative and sinister in their delivery – hopefully this collaborative project will inspire listeners to explore their respective discographies.

With the appetite for overtones whetted, let's turn to a true legend of the throat singing tradition: Tuva, Siberia's Sainkho Namtchylak. Throat singing, also known as chime in Tuva, is a Central Asian art form, characterised by producing two or three distinct sounds at the same time. The latest release from Slumberland (aka Belgian producer and instrument builder Jochem Baelus) features Namtchylak in a co-headlining role, her vocals weaving their way between the hand built instruments, stirring a pot that simmers on the brink of noise, threatening to boil over. Unhinged mantra-like beat poetry floats atop the clatter of pipes and marimbas on "1000 Days" where Namtchylak laments *"Karma is like a lottery"*. The song is highly dynamic, rising up to greet the listener like the hustle and bustle of some fantastical market square.

When Namtchylak finally screams near the end of the track, it hurts to listen, but she reins it back in to meet the melody time and again – a world away from SteppenDoom's maximalism. It never strays too far into distortion that she cannot return to the root note. Namtchylak can, of course, easily manipulate her vocal cords to sound completely inhuman and demonic. Tuvan throat singing is taken to a new level by her shaman-like expertise, bringing a ritualistic aspect to this already ambitious release. Her voice at times sounds like it's part of the percussion, another pitched point of punctuation breaking up the eternal drone. At other times, it's the main feature, and she is the ringleader as she steers the sound to more adventurous places.

These are two albums pushing the monolithic weight of drone music in exciting new directions, each employing throat singing in unexpected ways. *SteppenDoom* is an excellent introduction, but if you're looking to go all the way, try Slumberland and Namtchylak to get an idea of just how far this combination can be pushed in the hands of a mercurial instrumentalist and an impossible vocalist.
Rosie Esther Solomon

Deeper and down: Sainkho Namtchylak

Šimon Lupták

for the Black neo-noir and adventure films that were later referred to as Blaxploitation. Prior to that era, few African-American artists were hired to make movie music, with former jazzman composer/producer Quincy Jones (*The Pawnbroker*, *In Cold Blood*) being the regular exception. However, after Isaac Hayes's 1971 "Theme From Shaft" single and its parent album became crossover bestsellers, marquee groove masters Curtis Mayfield, James Brown, Barry White and Marvin Gaye all jumped into the game with various degrees of success.

While all of them delivered brilliant albums, Gaye's jazzy *Trouble Man* was the most unique, incorporating post-bop horns and Motor City soul with electronic instruments and tape loops. Gaye's experiments were lush and minimalistic simultaneously. Coming a year after his masterwork *What's Going On*, Gaye produced *Trouble Man* while also contributing vocals, drums, Moog, keyboards and piano. Later, he proclaimed the album to be a personal favourite.

Over the years the title track has been remade by Neneh Cherry, George Duke and Joni Mitchell, but, in celebration of the disc's 50th anniversary, American musician Daniel Zelonky aka Low Res decided to remake the album using a 36 piece orchestra and a funk band. The result is a brilliant tribute to Gaye and the underrated movie it was attached to.

From the opening chords and greasy sax on "Main Theme From Trouble Man" it's obvious that Res knows what he's doing. Zelonky's imaginative arrangements expand the fierce drums and spacy Moog of ""T" Plays It Cool" and stretches the bassline on ""T"Stands For Trouble" until it sounds as though the strings might snap.

The original soundtrack contained very little in the way of vocals. For this project Res employed rocker Black Wolf, who recalls Robert Plant on his own material, but sounds kinda soulful on "Cleo's Apartment" and "Trouble Man". While it might seem slightly arrogant for Res to include his own composition, the sinister "Chalky" is a welcome addition, cool and powerful as a Gaye outtake.

Zelonky's project is a wonderland of mixed genres united by a singular musical vision, paying respectful and inventive homage to the spirit of 70s psychedelic soul, jazz fusion and funk.

Michael A Gonzales

Roc Marciano & The Alchemist
The Elephant Man's Bones
ALC/Pimpire International CD/DL/LP

After more than a decade since their first collaboration, Long Island favourite Roc Marciano and prolific producer The Alchemist have finally answered their fans' prayers with a full-length album. Projects of this nature can sometimes fall short of the hype that has been built in the runup to their release, but *The Elephant Man's Bones* is no disappointment – the factors that have cultivated reverence are displayed in full force, with Marciano's pen game as sharp as ever and The Alchemist's production showing no sign of peaking.

Marciano is often credited as the founding father of drumless loop raps – a style that has been replicated to excess over recent years – so it's no surprise that some of the album's high points are rooted in the same method. The opening strains of "Rubber Hand Grip" set the pace perfectly, building atmosphere seemingly without effort, while elsewhere on "Déjà Vu", syncopated piano keys prove that Roc's flow will flourish on any instrumental.

Drums are in the mix too and provide some of my personal favourites from the album, thanks to the smooth, soul-flecked highlight of "Quantum Leap" and the Action Bronson assisted "Daddy Kane", which also contains some of the most entertaining lyrical moments. Boldy James and Knowledge The Pirate help to bolster the proceedings with their respective features, while Ice-T brings some gritty realism to "The Horns of Abraxas".

But Marciano remains the main attraction, with The Alchemist helping him to deliver one of his strongest projects since 2012's *Reloaded*. Now the seal is broken – and considering what Alchemist has been prone to do with other collaborators – perhaps we'll hear more from the duo in the future.

Tim Fish

MoE/Bruxa Maria
Skinwalker
ConradSound CD/DL

MoE Y Escalantes
Saint Vitus Dance
ConradSound CD/DL

Oslo duo MoE – Guro Skumsnes Moe (bass/vocals) and Håvard Skaset (guitar) – are prodigious collaborators and conservatory escapees vaulting a space between improv and noise rock with neither macho muscle flex nor art skronk affectation. That's no mean feat. A recent press release hints at their "Neurosis meets Peter Brötzmann sound", a description that ill-serves their open, restless spirit. But as sketchy musical coordinates go you could probably do worse, if only to leave them behind.

On one of two new releases they partnered with crust-adjacent London punks Bruxa Maria. *Skinwalker* arose from their meeting of minds on a 2019 UK tour and is particularly striking for the way it frees Bruxa Maria to go off hardcore piste. Doomy opener "Shapeshift Skylight" is an exquisite drag, a magma leviathan growing legs in the gulf and plodding ashore, solidifying with every step. Vistas of caustic noise and cosmic fire-sludge follow, increasingly unfettered yet, conversely, ritualistic in deliberation.

Saxophonist Devin Brahja Waldman last worked alongside Skaset and Moe on *Sciamachy*, an album by his aunt, the poet Anne Waldman, with a guest cohort including William Parker, Laurie Anderson and My Bloody Valentine's Debbie Googe. Waldman joins *Skinwalker*'s final track "The Spirit Is Out", with initially plaintive phrases that sundown wildly as the track enters a menacing maelstrom summoned by Guro's incantatory vocals.

Like her voice, ecstatic reeds are also used more widely on *Saint Vitus Dance*, a collaboration with father and son Oscar and Martín Escalante who met MoE during a Mexican tour. The elder Escalante, Oscar, is a veteran of the Mexican free music underground whose multidisciplinary practice incorporates instrument building, as showcased by his custom-made contrabass bagpipes on "Bagpipes From Guanajuato".

He and Martín cover most of the album's alto and baritone sax, interplaying like nothing short of a full-on synaptic firework display throughout. Waldman contributes again, largely as a drummer this time, but joins the Escalantes on sax for some particularly electrifying trio exchange on the title track, which closes the release on a figuratively, if not literally, breathless note.

James Gormley

Anthony Moore
Csound + Saz
Touch CD/DL

A sudden zing of strummed strings, then the sustained swell of an organ-like drone. Across its surface harmonic particles glisten, like droplets caught by sunlight on a bank of billowing cloud. The drone rolls on, coiling, subtly shapeshifting as it spreads. That play of iridescence intensifies, projecting an array of intriguing spectral figures. A keening cry emerges, and continues to ring out evocatively, while gently undulating chords circulate, like revolving thermal currents. The strings belong to the saz, a brilliantly resonant Turkish lute. On this recording the instrument has been fitted with a contact microphone, and its sound is expanded and embellished by means of an E-bow and the Csound computer system.

Anthony Moore conceived *Csound + Saz* in response to an invitation to participate in an event, staged at London's Iklectik venue, to mark the Touch label's 40th anniversary last June. Moore saw it as an appropriate occasion to celebrate the saz, for many years one of his favourite instruments. He devised ways to filter and modify its sound, and prepared a graphical interface in readiness for live performance. Then he contracted Covid and was unable to appear. But, prompted by Jon Wozencroft and Mike Harding of Touch, Moore performed the piece at home and made a recording that was played for appreciative listeners at Iklectik. Now, in unaltered form, this remarkable 30 minute tour de force is made available for a wider audience.

Moore takes particular delight in that beckoning wail, which extends through the final minutes and closing fade. He says it reminds him of the voices of muezzins in Istanbul, "the wonderful sound of the calls to prayer". Given Turkey's recent involvement in the shipment of Ukranian grain, listeners may perhaps find additional resonance in Wozencroft's photograph of a wheatfield, adorning the cover of this inspiring release.

Julian Cowley

Mthunzi Mvubu
The 1st Gospel
Ropeadope CD/DL

Alto saxophonist Mthunzi Mvubu is a member of Shabaka Hutchings's group Shabaka & The Ancestors, and has recorded and performed with Thandi Ntuli, Nduduzo Makhathini, Ayanda Sikade and Tumi Mogorosi, names that should be deeply familiar to fans of current South African jazz.

Mvubu's group on *The 1st Gospel* features tenor saxophonist Tobias Meinhart, keyboardist Afrika Mkhize, Dalisu Ndlazi on bass, and Sphelelo Mazibuko (who has worked with Ntuli, Linda Sikhakhane and Sisonke Xonti) on drums, with multi-instrumentalist Mpumi Dhlamini playing tenor saxophone on one track and Hammond organ on another. Most of these players are part of the same generation, save Mkhize, who's been around for decades and is a kind of elder statesman, if less well known than Abdullah Ibrahim or the late Bheki Mseleku.

South African jazz has been moving fast over the past few years, so this music, recorded in 2019, doesn't possess the political engagement or post-colonialist consciousness of more recent work by Xonti, Mogorosi, Ntuli or Makhathini. It's also less determined to propose or manifest blends of jazz and indigenous musical ideas. It swings in a traditional and often soulful way. "Voice" is a powerful piece with the epic sweep of McCoy Tyner's mid-1970s work, but Mazibuko's drumming has a light touch and a polyrhythmic dancing quality that brings to mind Tony Allen and Ed Blackwell, keeping things light even as Mkhize pounds the keys.

Other pieces, like "In The Wake Of Your Song" and "A Child Speaks", have an almost smooth jazz feel, with Hammond, synth and slow, undulating tempos pushing the music into a self-consciously romantic zone. In a way, the relative low stakes of this album – Mvubu just wants to play some good tunes, not make a grand statement — make *The 1st Gospel* that much more pleasurable to listen to.

Phil Freeman

Jérôme Noetinger
Sur Quelques Mondes Étranges
Gagarin DL/2×LP

At one point, maybe a decade or two ago, in a state of abject despair with neo-liberal capitalist reality, I used to think, Fuck changing the planet, let's just build

Out of the woods: Leslie Keffer

Ohio's **Leslie Keffer** returns to active noise service with a proliferation of new releases. By **Raymond Cummings**

Leslie Keffer
Reverie
No Part Of It CD-R/DL
Perceive
No Part Of It CD-R/DL
Aethereal
No Part Of It CD-R/DL
Blood Rhythms
Horror Pilation 1–5
No Part Of It 5×CD-R/5×DL/5×LP
Leslie Keffer & R Stevie Moore
I Wish I Could Feel
No Part Of It CD-R/DL/LP
Paroxysm: A Benefit Compilation For Leslie Keffer
Various
No Part Of It CD-R/DL

As fertile and full of promise as the early 2000s were for noise music, one had to be there, in a very real sense: at the often unlicensed shows, at the cluttered merch tables, in the basements where ultra-limited CD-R runs were burned, markered and sleeved. If you weren't, you were often simply out of luck. This insider exclusivity, borne of micro-imprint pragmatism and budgetary reality, had the effect of transforming many artists – you might not know or be able to learn anything about them, beyond a name that might as well be an alias – into minor myths.

If the digital horn of plenty that is the modern internet makes the above seem laughable, it also means that many years after her entrée to the American underground, it is now really and truly possible to become familiar with the solo work of Ohio native and former Laundry Room Squelcher, Leslie Keffer. Emerging in the early 2000s, Keffer treated noise as mirage and flower alike, translating chaos into beauty, locating grandeur in ugliness. If 2003's *Dielectric Lull* was an attempt to explore possibilities and 2005's *Pollutes* represented a radical leap in confidence and velocity, 2005's *Represents* – a roundup of live sets from earlier that year – was a crown jewel, rainbow riot runs of curdled tone and popcorned feedback wrought from radios, effects and vocals (her arsenal, then). And remember: in real time, it was hard to get hold of these artefacts. Access might be limited to an EP here, a Tarantula Hill compilation or Thurston Moore LP collaborative cut there, as scarcity and myth intertwined.

Last year, Keffer returned to music after a lengthy hiatus. "I definitely took a decade off. I was trying to figure out how to deal with my seizures and mental health, and I focused on that," she told *Foxy Digitalis* in a recent interview. In addition to older recordings appearing online, a raft of new releases, collaborations, reissues and even a benefit compilation have surfaced of late (while this review focuses on selected material released via the No Part Of It label, other releases are coming from labels including Chocolate Monk and No Rent). A more restrained and subtle sound artist, Keffer retains her ability to spellbind.

Recorded in 2002, the previously unreleased *Reverie* offers signal washes of distortion, rhythmic at times and insectine at others. To hear it is to be figuratively suspended in air, held aloft by melodies miniature, accidental and imagined, benevolent ("Titrate") or malign ("Ingest"). At once static and exploratory, *Reverie* vibrates with a faint anxiety; the more recent *Perceive*, part of her move into ambient, is mellow and more cinematic by comparison.

Synthesizers and effects are stirred into the cauldron, while faded vocal harmonies swim in and out of the mix; a mild industrial crust congeals over everything. Listening to the somnolent "Quake" or the kaleidoscopic "Tremble" is like watching an unnatural chemical sunset sear itself into your field of vision. *Aethereal* – a "sibling release" to *Perceive* – leans more towards ambient, tilting and shuffling horizontal intensities but concerned with degrees of quiet awe and mild trepidation; it can be difficult at times to say where the vocals end and the instruments begin, but perhaps that isn't the point.

Blood Rhythms is a long running collaborative enterprise of No Part Of It proprietor Arvo Zylo. He's welcomed Keffer onboard for the project's *Horror Pilation* series, each entry of which clocks in at around 40 minutes. The throughline is a droning repetition, echoing and, to one degree or another, meditative. The yoga aerie-appropriate *Horror Pilation* is followed by the heavy ebb and lava flow of *Horror Pilation 2*, a churning, chanted (theoretical) soundtrack to rite and ritual. *Horror Pilation 3* is an extended liturgical exhalation, while the first side of *Horror Pilation 5* introduces dips, uptilts and quavers to that concept before the flip slips into a black-lit corrosive delirium suggestive, in spirit, of the late 2000s material released by US black metal artist Xasthur. Of these I found myself drawn most frequently back to *Horror Pilation 4*, where the duo's synths and effects simmer and flicker, imitative of a wood flute, in what feels like a wide open space, evincing little change and zero resolution.

I Wish I Could Feel, a team-up with veteran Nashville jack of all trades R Stevie Moore, finds this batch at its most offbeat and pop. Syncopated beats, toothy hooks and Moore's murmured asides are joined to Keffer's airy drone clouds and harmonic vistas, resulting in music that sounds like the product of multiple chemistry sets: the fizzy, despondent piano-sewn "Hallowed", the pensive cyborg blues of "Threads", the title track's bleary post-disco sizzle and thump.

All proceeds from the benefit compilation *Paroxysm* will go to Keffer, to keep her afloat while she seeks disability support due to epilepsy. It's an eclectic, expansive compilation with something for everyone: Fletcher Pratt's phased, pitch-shifted mayhem, Unicorn Hard-On's smashed beat bounce, Sharkiface's rattling minimalist loops, Erotic Tangerines' creeped-out, creepy electro, Skin Graft's rank, crinkled harsh noise wall, and much more. When and if their beneficiary tours again and they join her on the road, she'll be in good company. ☐

Nick Kreager

another planet, call it Earth 2 and get the fuck out of here. Ambitious and ridiculous I know, but if one doesn't have ambition, if one is concerned with and hampered by ridicule, then one shouldn't get out of bed. Ever. Look at Liz Truss. She is – or at least was – ambitious and ridiculous, and she still rises in the morning.

If my feeble grasp of French and my firm grasp of Google Translate are to be trusted, then Jérôme Noetinger's album title means *On Some Strange Worlds* and it was made on a strange world called The World, or Earth if you're feeling dirty – a planet that is being ruined by bastards. It is released by a label named in honour of pioneering cosmonaut Yuri Alekseyevich Gagarin, a label that is run by another pioneering cosmonaut, Felix Kubin.

Maybe it wasn't made on this strange world at all, but rather in orbit around it. After all, orbital movement is crucial to this album in that it is made by the live manipulation of reels of magnetic tape that go around and around. It sounds like a zoo in the night and urban conflict. It is visceral. It is exotic and erotic. It is musique concrète. It is raw dub power. It is also a live studio album beautifully recorded by Tobias Levin.

In a soundclash with a hardcore DIY noise band or a free improv quintet Noetinger would win hands down. But no one wins or loses in the music game. Everyone is a victor just for trying. Jérôme Noetinger tries and succeeds.

Richard Thomas

No Home
Young Professional
Bandcamp DL/MC

Pitch dark, kitchen sink production meets fuzzed out guitar distortion and powerful yet imprecise vocals on the latest album from No Home, whose anxious sound experiments tackle hustle culture's relentless pressure to be productive.

Charlie Valentine's compelling, lethargic vocals and effects on "Easy Peeler" swirl together in an inescapable vortex, as they sing about euphoria in a melancholic tone. Valentine knows exactly how to turn a simple chord into something deeply unsettling. The rest of the music is super sparse and terrifyingly tinny, with Valentine's vocal on each song lingering like an afterimage.

"Monkey Brain" employs droning vocals bordering on throat singing; the lyrics are suitably anxious and desperate: *"I need to exorcise this feeling from my body"*. By the song's end, the clouds part and the final lines describe a *"gold chain above my head/Like a crucifix"*.

Valentine says this album is "about a young professional falling deep into the tangle of meaning(less/ful) life… and coming out something less human but closer to the Earth". This metamorphosis occurs during standout track "No One Reads The Manuals Anymore". Charlie sings *"And I'll never feel lonely/I'll be writing my memoirs by the river/Tell all my friends/That I'm a different/Woman"*, and the effect is spine tingling.

It's rare to find an earworm on a No Home album but when it happens, it's all the more powerful. Something has changed, and Valentine feels barely capable of conveying what. But that inability to communicate makes their confession all the more honest.

Rosie Esther Solomon

Rascali Klepitoire
I'd Love To Turn…
Fony DL

There are many records whose sleeves parody that of *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*. On the inside gatefold of *We're Only In It For The Money*, Frank Zappa stands to one side, sneering down the lens in short dress and pigtails. The Rutles deliver their version with a bit more love. John Oswald's *Peppery* album cover eschews sardonic wit or knowing irony in favour of a rough surrealism: Paul McCartney stands behind a bust of Beethoven and in front of William S Burroughs, watching John Lennon as he blows a massive alpine horn. Ringo lurks at the back, partially obscured by Jane Fonda holding an oboe.

Oswald's Rascali Klepitoire project is less Lennon and more Ludwig – a more classically orientated focus for his plunderphonic collages, comprising a mixture of sampled pieces and instrumental snippets that are playable live by musicians (musical notation will be included with the release). "I'd Love To Turn…" stretches the ascending coda of "A Day In The Life" into a Gustav Holst-like drama that's big enough for some as yet undiscovered planet. Meanwhile "Fee Fie Foe Fum" snips the barbs from the hooks of The Temptations' "Get Ready" and layers them into a stuttering new formation.

"Tip" goes further, gathering multiple barbs from the hooks of numerous familiar pieces of classical music, melding them with the corners and edgelets of pop classics – *Für Elise* and *Gymnopédie No 1* next to Johnny Mandel's "Suicide Is Painless" and Scott Joplin's "The Entertainer". Only a fraction of a second of each is heard, enough to fire the synapses before the next fragment glides through.

Oswald's style registers like a kind of aural supercut – but where, say, Vicki Bennett might emphasise this transition for emotive effect or to underline a gag, Oswald's edits are seamless. Rather than pastiche, these pieces syphon the Technicolor melodrama of each sample, distilling it all into one fast moving and amorphous elixir that rolls and gleams like room temperature mercury.

Spenser Tomson

Julia Reidy & Morten Joh
Tape Shadow
Futura Resistenza DL/MC

Recorded in Berlin in spring, *Tape Shadow* could be misheard as a Morton Feldman piece recorded on an old cassette that has been boiled, or listless Javanese gamelan heard from a distance during winter, or the late, great guitarist/improvisor Hans Reichel jamming with an ice cream van or carillon that is very far away.

What do we take from those slightly silly analogies? That this music communicates spatial distance, a sense of the aged and worn, and a meteorological dimension, namely heat and the absence thereof. The latter seems worryingly apposite. Spring 2023 in Berlin will be discernibly colder for many.

Materially speaking the constituent elements here are guitar, vibraphone, percussion, tape delay, synthesizer. Aesthetically its constituent elements are crystalline, brittle textures and a by and large amorphous flow. When I was younger I used to ski and hues of pink, blue, green and lilac were sometimes visible when you'd gaze upon the snow and the ice in the intense brightness of the Alpine light. Rays of similar hues radiate here. There is a melancholic, post-bereavement feel. That strange sensation of being in the world and out of it. When all you can do is drift as purposefully as you can and try to get through a blizzard of conflicting emotions.

Though *Tape Shadow* is the music of a duo, emotionally it feels incredibly solitary and cold. Not so much a conversation as two monologues that weave in and out of each other and echo each other, agree and disagree. Maybe that's just me being a sad case and reading things into things that are just not there. Faces in clouds. Either way *Tape Shadow* casts its shadow in a manner that is very captivating.

Richard Thomas

Dawn Richard & Spencer Zahn
Pigments
Merge CD/DL/LP

Pigments is a collaboration between Dawn Richard and bassist/composer Spencer Zahn. Brooklyn musician Zahn plays in Richard's touring band and nurtures a solo career of album blending ambient, minimalist and jazz textures, including the recent *Pale Horizon*. He has earned acclaim for his sense of structure, and modest criticism for recordings that can be lacking in compositional drama.

Luckily, Richard happens to be a brilliantly idiosyncratic artist. Ever since her *Armor On* EP, this former Sean 'Puffy' Combs protégé has created projects that flit between propulsive dance music, raw electronic pop and wispy R&B melodies. Case in point is her acclaimed 2021 album *Second Line* which brought a futuristic bent to the iconography of New Orleans Mardi Gras celebrations. Zahn may be accompanied here by an ensemble of musicians that includes tenor saxophonist Jas Walton and Malcolm Pearson on strings, but the real soloist on *Pigments* is Richard herself, taking an unconventional route to every note she sings.

In the accompanying text Richard says, "I wanted my voice to be moss surrounding the roots of Spencer's compositions, never forcing the moment to fill every space but rather revelling in the openness of thought and breath." The result is an album of impressions that hops between wordless instrumentals and vocal numbers. The best of the former is "Saffron", which is firmly girded to Zahn's supple bass work. "Vantablack" pays homage to Black identity and brown skin, and Richard sings on "Sandstone", *"I want to see more than your eyes"*, stretching out her syllables until they sound wispy and airy. Violin and clarinet intertwine on "Sienna", but "Cerulean" is a bit too vague in Richard's sentiments: *"I can't get past all the blues/All I see is cerulean blue/I'm still mad at you"*.

Richard may not be the most distinctive lyricist, yet she still leaves a strong impression. Her uniquely hazy voice and the way she adds unusual trills to her stanzas means that the listener is always aware of her presence. At the end of *Pigments* lies "Umber", during which a slight 4/4 dance pulse kicks in. *"I'm gonna climb this mountain/And I'm never gonna stop", Richard sings. "Feel the energy"*. It's an odd sentiment for an ambient, imagistic suite like *Pigments*, but it feels right for that moment.

Mosi Reeves

Claire Rousay
Wouldn't Have To Hurt
Mended Dreams DL/MC

Circuit Des Yeux & Claire Rousay
Sunset Poem
Matador DL

Claire Rousay & E Fishpool
Distance Therapy
Longform Editions DL

In Claire Rousay's music, casual chats between friends at coffee shops and bars swirl among glowing electronics, forming stylised vignettes of life. The idea of persevering and finding kernels of beauty in everyday experiences colours much of her practice, and three of her most recent releases explore these themes from different vantage points.

Wouldn't Have To Hurt, whose proceeds go to LGBTQ suicide prevention and mental health organisation The Trevor Project, paints a frank picture of anxiety and depression. Using field recordings, electronics and fragmented guitar and piano, the album carves a narrative arc that stretches from darkness into light. Stylistically, it travels along the same path as previous records like 2021's *A Softer Focus* and 2022's *Everything Perfect Is Already Here* – radiant tones hum beneath laughter and chatter, melodies simmer with melancholy, static crinkles and snaps. Questions such as *"What's the point of living"*, uttered by Madison Van Dine, whose voice was sampled from a YouTube video, serve as Rousay's central tenet. By the time she reaches gentleness at the end, it feels like hope.

With *Sunset Poem* and *Distance Therapy*, Rousay employs different sonic

Kate Carr

Iain Chambers

Rubbish Music
Upcycling
Flaming Pines CD/DL

At the start of the 1980s, uncompromisingly raucous saxophone and electric guitar trio Borbetomagus teamed up with instrument builder Hugh Davies to record an album entitled *Work With What Has Been Spoiled*. That arresting title was just right for music that drew energy from the decay of outmoded values and assumptions while slotting neatly into an emerging aesthetics of noise. Early in the third decade of the 21st century, at what appears to be in crucial respects a more advanced stage of cultural decomposition, we find London based composers and ardent field recordists Kate Carr and Iain Chambers working together as Rubbish Music. Until relatively recently their choice of name may have been taken simply as a self-deprecating joke, but the context has changed dramatically. Rubbish now connotes ubiquitous environmental waste, global spoilage and the prospect of catastrophe.

That's not to say that on their debut LP *Upcycling* Carr and Chambers indulge in uncharacteristically grandiose statements or portentous gestures. The scope and achievements of their music remain proportionate to their inquisitive interest in the intricate entanglements of sound, space and social practices, as witnessed from day to day. Still, heard in context, this is an indicative music of our time. Using electroacoustic techniques to craft montage forms, the duo contrive to evoke and respond to pressing and widespread concerns. The title itself catches a flavour of the zeitgeist – the urgent need to arrest decline and reverse downward trends has replaced former faith in the linear advance of inevitable progress.

More immediately, the word upcycling encapsulates this duo's way of working. In place of conventional instruments, their sources for sounds are discarded objects, everyday detritus, the kind of commonplace materials that were classed as neo-dada when they featured in Fluxus actions during the 1960s and 70s. But whereas earlier generations of musicians and artists kitted out with empty shampoo bottles, redundant toilet plungers, caked oven grills, rusty saucepans and the like saw them as terms of confrontation, or a means of subversion, Rubbish Music aspire to constructively transmute domestic waste into the stuff of engaging sound art. They work with what has been spoiled or thrown away in order to reveal its latent value, or rather to affirm the upcycling capacity of human creativity. There is nothing sardonic in their choice of "Trash And Treasure" as the title for a hands-on performance. Rather those words register, as does the music itself, the transformation that may arise from imaginative engagement with even the most unpromising materials.

Throughout the 20 minutes of "Trash And Treasure" Carr and Chambers envelop their disparate selection of sonic odds and ends within an unexpectedly ethereal aura, a halo of continuity derived, presumably, from processed field recordings. Most of their other constituent sounds, the scrapes, grating, crunches, rasps, clangs and whippy rumbles, withhold the specific identity of their trashy origin. A notable exception is a brief outburst from a squeaky rubber toy. For some listeners it may recall Steve Beresford's frequent and often hilarious use of similar toys back in the 70s and 80s, during performances that thrived on disruption and incongruity. Such a squeak in the context of Rubbish Music still raises a smile, but it doesn't disturb or divert the upcycling process, any more than the liquid gurgles to be heard on Carr's composition "Bathroom Throwaways" or the casual whistling and snippets of incidental conversation that filter through the modified industrial textures of Chambers's "Re-use And Recycling Centre".

Collectively and individually our relationship to what we throw away is undergoing radical and necessary change. The resourcefully fabricated soundscapes of *Upcycling* can be heard as modest yet significant reflections on that fundamental shift. They embody the elevating and transformative action of imaginative involvement with discarded materials. In the process they give audible expression to our ability to resist pessimistic resignation and to realise creative redeployment.
Julian Cowley

palettes to achieve human connection with mixed results. *Sunset Poem* remixes three tracks from Circuit Des Yeux's 2021 album *-io*, transforming her lush, orchestral music into crashing electronic swarms. It's maximalist – Circuit Des Yeux's music often involves theatrics – but here, that drama is even more heightened by the use of rich, explosive electronics. At times, this full sound can be enthralling, highlighting the grief of *-io* in its original form in heart wrenching bursts of radiant sound. But the blaring horns and saccharine drones can become overwrought, which ends up obscuring the spiralling feeling of the music.

Distance Therapy, a collaboration between Rousay and Emily Fishpool, has a different problem: it feels like a sparse hodgepodge, likely because it was pieced together over email (Fishpool is a Yuin artist based in Australia). It bounces back and forth between field recordings and static pulses, lo-fi grooves and sounds of nature, never really finding a steady pace. Yet in occasional spurts of gushing water and bass pulses, there's a powerful sense of nostalgia, one feeling left to grasp.

Of these releases, the last wisps of guitar on *Wouldn't Have To Hurt* stand out the most, long past their final vibrations. In those moments, Rousay finds space for contemplation in the subtlest of sounds. Here, she shows us once again that simplicity can be all you need to unearth the hidden beauty of being alive.
Vanessa Ague

Tyshawn Sorey Trio + 1
The Off-Off Broadway Guide To Synergism
Pi 3×CD/DL

Tyshawn Sorey has received fulsome praise for large scale compositional works such as *Monochromatic Light (Aftermath)*, written for the half-centenary of the Rothko Chapel in Houston, Texas, and in improvisation/conduction situations. But recently, he has twice released what amounts to mother tongue work in that crazy old genre called jazz.

As with Jack DeJohnette, Paul Motian or Gerry Hemingway, it's a bit of a gaffe to simply call Sorey a drummer, and leave it at that. His intense musicality might be said to work through everything he attempts, irrespective of genre, but his jazz playing remains distinct from his other projects. *Mesmerism*, with pianist Aaron Diehl and bassist Matt Brewer, surprised some when it offered a set of repertory material done in a relatively straightforward manner. The surprise is puzzling. You talk to your mum differently

Beatriz Sá

to how you talk to your workmates.

It's the same with *The Off-Off Broadway Guide To Synergism*. It's clumsily titled, but you know exactly what he means by it, because it's all there in the interpretation of things like "Night And Day", "Three Little Words", "Out Of Nowhere" and "It Could Happen To You". In the sociolinguistics of jazz, these were all taken off-Broadway and revoiced out of the corner of the mouth, in a constantly dynamic synergism with street musics. It's no accident that the three disc set also includes versions (during the same first disc) of Ornette Coleman's "Mob Job" and Billy Strayhorn's "Chelsea Bridge", a tune whose implied whole tone chords somehow have a strong resonance in Sorey's work to date.

He's joined here again by Aaron Diehl, but with the brighter toned Russell Hall on bass. Guesting with the group is alto saxophonist Greg Osby, whose mere presence, before he sounds a single commanding note, is a reminder of a moment in jazz when the music discovered a new synergy between the neighbourhood and the music lab. There's well over three hours of music here and not a minute of it wasted. Four guys talking the talk, rendering what the Scots call the speak of the place.

Brian Morton

Sourdure
De Bon Astre
three:four CD/DL/MC

A primordial sense of disquiet and beauty possesses the music that French musician and Tanz Mein Herz/Kaumwald/Orgue Agnès member Ernest Bergez makes as Sourdure. His raw and lo-fi yet painstakingly composed avant folk draws inspiration from the folklore of the Auvergne region in France's Massif Central, applying contemporary production techniques to music that exudes the aura of a long lost artefact.

De Bon Astre takes the listener across immense mountains and wide pastoral plains, conjuring images and sounds of a bygone era. From the opening "De Bon Astre (Bòst)" with its discordant flutes and humming textures, to the harmonised singing on closer "De Bon Astre (Vòtz)", the album conveys grief and joy, death and birth, conflict and friendship, stretched across aeons.

Each of its 26 miniatures – most a minute or two long – seems to trap a singular moment in time, channelling it into a chiaroscuro fiddle drone such as on "Baptiste En Barque" or Sun Araw-like desolate beats on "Romanche" before moving on to the next scene. Some vignettes end too soon; others such as "Tornar Ehl Fuòc" develop patiently, arranging plucked strings into an elegant tremolo.

In spite of its bucolic atmosphere, Bergez's music is never a purist cry against modern life. Rather, it uses his connection with Auvergne's heritage and the Occitane language to build a bridge between the then and now, the rural and the urban. Although *De Bon Astre* was originally created for a film set in the present, Sébastien Betbeder's 2019 *Up The Mountain*, the album's densely woven soundscapes gesture beyond a single narrative towards a multiverse of characters and situations.

Antonio Poscic

Stabbing
Extirpated Mortal Process
Comatose CD/DL

Stabbing are a Texas based band who've only been together about 18 months, but they're pumping out quality death metal at an enviable pace. Their first EP, the four track 11 minute *Ravenous Psychotic Onslaught*, came out in December 2021, and it's now been followed by a full-length debut offering 12 tracks in just over 33 minutes.

Brutal death metal of the type Stabbing play is a highly structured and restrictive style. You're allowed to sprinkle samples of dialogue and/or screams from horror films into your songs, but the songs themselves must hew to a particular form – short, with relentless, pounding, built from downtuned riffs and machine gun drum barrages. This is music with very little time for subtlety or compositional trickery. Stabbing know the rules and abide by them: their riffs are bludgeoning, Marvin Ruiz's guitar and Meryl Martinez's bass blending into a thick roar you can taste at the back of your throat, with Rene Martinez's sharp-tuned drums clattering and pinging at the centre of the storm. Vocalist Bridget Lynch has the guttural power of a grizzly.

What sets Stabbing apart is their willingness to be catchy – within reason. Their theme song "Stabbing" begins with a cannonade of drums and furious, repetitive eruptions from Lynch, but when the main riff comes in, it's an almost melodic chug punctuated by dissonant squeals, not unlike something one might hear on a Cannibal Corpse record. "Visceral Liquid Terror" features a hypnotically twisting and turning melody and some highly adrenalised drum fills. "It Ends With Flames" is a particularly relentless performance that showcases Martinez's skilful, precise drumming and some dissonant guitar harmonies from Ruiz (when he takes an actual solo on "Leishmaniasis", it's unexpected and quite welcome).

Stabbing understand the virtues of simplicity and brutality, but listen closely and they'll surprise you.

Phil Freeman

Twinkle3 featuring David Sylvian & Kazuko Hohki
Upon This Fleeting Dream
Cortizona DL/LP

On *Upon This Fleeting Dream*, shattered beats and feathery shakuhachi melodies weave around haikus. There's a sense of mystery to the music, driven by unexpected twists and turns that match the contemplative yet plain speaking poetry.

This atmosphere isn't a surprise coming from Twinkle3, the trio of Richard Scott, Dave Ross and Clive Bell, whose past music has explored cosmic themes through electroacoustic experimentation and nearly palpable sound. But here the trio look to medieval and 16th century Japanese poetry concerning death and goodbyes for inspiration, taking a darker and more circuitous approach to their buoyant sound.

The musical melodies here mimic the poetry read by David Sylvian and Kazuko Hohki in English and Japanese, mirroring both the rhythm of the verses and the meaning behind them. Jangling wind chimes ring out as Sylvian reads *"Throughout the frosty night I lay awake"*, creating a chilled and icy atmosphere; raindrops and flutes swirl with anxiety around questioning phrases.

In spite of this unity between media, the album often feels disjointed, focused less on an overall picture of how the themes might all fit together than on each specific moment. There are constant starts and stops, sharp shifts from delicate shakuhachi melodies into crashing electronics, leaving the feeling that the music is more a collection of ideas than a succinct statement.

Upon This Fleeting Dream finds its footing as both a meditation and a space for surprising explorations in its closing moments. Here, the group let a low-key groove hang beneath flute hums, gently ruminating as Sylvian decisively reads, *"Empty handed I entered the world/Barefoot I leave it"* . A sense of reflection and poignancy seeps through this lilting phrase. It's the kind of haunted, ethereal sound that gets to the heart of what it feels like to say goodbye.

Vanessa Ague

Urban Eden
Residual Tales
Shimmering Moods CD/DL

On Jacob Kirkegaard's *4 Rooms*, the Danish sound artist recorded the ambient silence of bustling but now abandoned churches and gymnasiums near the Chernobyl powerplant in Ukraine, folding the spectral sounds back into the room and capturing the subsequent layers of reverberation. The effect is a kind of double haunting: the pieces evoke the radiation which drenches those uninhabited spaces, but there is also a sense of loss for the human noises that are no longer present.

Residual Tales – the second album from Urban Eden, a collaboration between Liz Helman and Dominic Hemy – creates a set of textured pieces which at times recalls *4 Rooms*. However, where Kirkegaard leaves those spaces empty apart from their own echo, Urban Eden create something far more illusory and vivid, as though they have managed to conjure snippets of the sounds which existed there before.

The album's opening track "Slim Pickings (Tale One)" is a fug of magnetic drones which shuffle and creep, feeling their way along the walls and running its hands over rough stone and clammy window sills. From this initial abstraction, a deliberate disorientation begins. On "Let The Sea Take My Words (Tale Six)", the expected tidal churn is replaced with distant fiddle and urban chatter while "Best Left Forgotten" moves the listener between subterranean ambience and the open, airy swish of grass on bare feet, the swift dissolve between textures registering like the strange scene changes of a dream.

On Kirkegaard's piece "Swimming Pool" he finds only empty drone bouncing around those reflective tiles, while Urban Eden's similarly resonant "Dissolving Resolve (Tale Seven)" coaxes the voices of children laughing and splashing from similarly porcelain surfaces. Where *4 Rooms* was about absence, the loss of human-made sound within Chernobyl's zone of exclusion, Urban Eden have created their own fictional zone where spectral sonic detritus is conjured back from some imaginary loss.

Spenser Tomson

Venus Ex Machina
Doxa
AD 93 DL/LP

Doxa is the second album from London based interdisciplinary artist Nontokozo F Sihwa aka Venus Ex Machina, following 2021's *Lux*. It continues further in the same direction, with vibrant techno soundscapes that draw inspiration from cyberpunk dystopias. If *Lux* felt like Sihwa was engaging in world-building, *Doxa* is concerned with deeper excavations, digging down to a sound that is earthy, elemental and pungent.

"Zeus And Metis" emerges from a bubbling electronic haze with arcs of cinematic strings sweeping across dark harmonic changes, driven by hard-hitting cinematic rhythms. Burning synths and crackling atmospherics curl around a melodic spiral in "The Abyss", slowly carving out a hypnotic well that deepens and sparkles. A pulsating bass drone centres the mystic groove of "Vier", decorated by delicate percussion, brass samples, raw-edged noises and unintelligible voices.

"Cleofus" is another trance-inducing track that patiently draws the listener in, its surface dominated by thudding kicks and minimalistic drum rhythms sparking a multitude of delay echoes in all directions, while a few layers down emerge variations in rhythm, metallic drones, harmonic sedimental strata. Sihwa seems to be having fun with mismatched rhythmic layers on the strangely laid-back/hyped-up "Galaxy Crimewave", which dresses a plodding bass riff in frenetic hi-hats and delirious gurgling synths.

On a role: Vanessa Rossetto

Vanessa Rossetto
The Actress
Erstwhile 2×CD/DL

For many, recording devices are now their confidants. Sound recorders and iPhone voice memos, especially in periods of pandemic isolation, have helped artists tell stories that brought meaning to the strangeness of life. From Klein to L'Rain to Claire Rousay, musicians are taking the sounds of the domestic environment and placing them in a new, emotionally charged context through the collaboration of the listener.

But using recordings of your own environment can risk slipping into voyeurism, if artists open up their lives for attention or approval. Albums pieced together from intimate recordings can place one in the awkward position akin to being invited to a party where you don't know the host.

But when Vanessa Rossetto hits record – usually her phone in everyday situations – there's always a logic or a perspective that slowly comes into view. *"I can provide interesting content for you"*, promises an anonymous voice at the beginning of *The Actress*, setting up a context of spectatorship and emotional tension that shifts in mesmeric fashion over the following 90 minutes.

The album is an epic travelogue across the spaces of everyday life which accentuates the drama of normality, and returns repeatedly to the theme of the different roles we play for others. These are encoded deeper in the iconography and the allusions around the album: the cover of *The Actress* shows a horse, but it is see-through and there is no real animal there; "Arabella In Two Volumes" riffs on Charlotte Lennox's book which parodies Miguel de Cervantes's epic exploration of delusion, *Don Quixote*; the album title alludes to a central character in a story who, as Rossetto sees it, "both is and is not me".

The hypnotic textures of *The Actress* are carefully built from looped recordings of public and private places, often transitional spaces such as buses or trains or waiting rooms. The repetition gives a sense of lingering on or perhaps reprocessing experiences. There's also threads of Rossetto's own viola playing and drones, particularly on the lengthy "Katie Cruel", a sort of suite within the album itself, which help to connect one moment to the next.

The real fascination comes from the moments of emotional truth that Rossetto manages to bring to the surface. Instead of the experience of solitude that is often implied and sometimes fetishised by sound recordists exploring the countryside or domestic places, *The Actress* seeks out points of connection and overlap with others. In "Early Girl", an excited bustle of activity culminates in affable shouts of *"Hello my friend!"*, with a sense of serendipitous encounter that feels especially poignant post-Covid and amid the lengthy abstract passages of the album. "Meeting The Actress, Mid-Career" breaks out from a simple meal accompanied by fan or air conditioning to a distant snatch of a cover of Phil Collins's "In The Air Tonight", a cinematic moment of the mundane waiting for the spectacular.

But there are parts of *The Actress* that are uncanny and spectral to the point that they evade analysis. Over several weeks I've listened to it in many places, often in transit or waiting to get somewhere, and it is has become a comforting yet inscrutable companion. The context of the events it witnesses are never clear, but this is a record with many faces and a sense of emotional connection that is universal. *"Bigger than life"*, says another voice to conclude the album. Perhaps not bigger, but sometimes even better than the real thing.

Derek Walmsley

Vanessa Rossetto

Deft drum programming shines on the dizzy and stylish "Delta Of Dreams", a dextrous, scattershot arrangement of sharp percussion transients above a fuzzy, indecipherable spoken word performance, the beatwork here calling to mind recent Jlin. Reversed, downpitched beats propel the industrial rhythms of "Katak" towards an almost ecstatic groove. The Fourth World flavoured finale "Crush" also makes a feature of backwards sounds. Here, they are woven together with rhythmic bleeps and wide fluttering synths, closing the album on an uplifting note.

Leah Kardos

Beau Wanzer & Hieroglyphic Being
4 Dysfunctional Psychotic Release & Sonic Reprogramming Purposes Only
Natural Sciences DL/12"

Hieroglyphic Being
There Is No Acid In This House
Soul Jazz CD/DL/2×LP

At first I enjoyed *There Is No Acid In This House*, the third Soul Jazz solo album from Chicago's Jamal Moss, as a set of house tracks that seemed to blend the pioneering sounds of Ron Hardy, Marshall Jefferson and Lil Louis with Chicago's more experimental musical side, as represented by the AACM, The Art Ensemble Of Chicago and Sun Ra.

Enjoyed it, but couldn't quite see the point of it. But I was listening wrong, and my mistake was to perceive it as a collection of individual tracks. Out on the road, listened to as an odyssey, as something that flowed with improvisational freedom, it made a lot more sense and came to resemble nothing so much as those recently released Can live sets, both sonically and in spirit.

The palette here is a familiar one – undoubtedly the textures, drum patterns, bass tones and tempos on bangers like "When Situations Get 2 Desperate" and "Mephisto's Pulpit Of Stank" are directed squarely at the feet, and are if not exactly dancefloor friendly then certainly providing moments of bump, grind and hypnosis. What makes it unsettlingly

Sciences with fellow Chicago industrialist Beau Wanzer, whose "The Table Scrap" is gritty old school electro – Hieroglyphic Being's "This Is The Right Time In Human History 2 Be Stupid" on the flip is a stunning mix of MARRS-style oddity and head-nodding beats. Worth investigating.
Neil Kulkarni

Weyes Blood
And In The Darkness, Hearts Aglow
Sub Pop CD/DL/LP/MC
And In The Darkness, Hearts Aglow is Natalie Mering's fifth album, the second in a special trilogy that started with 2019's *Titanic Rising*. The themes have shifted slightly from the existential doom of the previous record; here Mering's songwriting hones in on contemporary feelings of loneliness and isolation.

The sound is widescreen, vintage chamber pop – think the lush harmony changes of Burt Bacharach, the saturated glamour of *Scott 4*-era Walker and rich vocal arrangements dressed in vintage 1970s Laurel Canyon colours, while the calm, nostalgic timbre of Mering's voice calls to mind Joni Mitchell, Judee Sill and Karen Carpenter.

The album opens with "It's Not Just Me, It's Everybody", a pulsing piano-led ballad that unfurls and swells with a stunning arrangement of gliding choral voices, warm orchestral strings and gilded harp glissandos courtesy of Mary Lattimore. Mering's voice calmly wraps itself around the edges of plush harmonies with lyrics that reference shared feelings of disconnection in the pandemic era: *"Living in the wake of overwhelming changes/We've all become strangers/Even to ourselves"*.

The apocalyptic "Children Of The Empire" merrily stomps towards a chorus of full-blown, Phil Spector-scaled wall of sound. "Grapevine" contains one of the strongest melodies on the album, couched in a swooning arrangement with velvet strings and choirs, tubular bells and swooping synths, building towards a climax of soaring, windswept grandeur. "God Turn Me Into A Flower" is a quieter meditation that focuses on Mering's naked voice with subdued, soft-burning synth textures performed and arranged by Daniel Lopatin aka Oneohtrix Point Never, stirring up feelings of quiet rapture. The opulent balladry of "Hearts Aglow" is a highlight, its lyrics summarising the album's overarching themes – yearning for human connection even while everything turns to shit around us. *"It's been a death march/The whole world is crumbling/Oh baby let's dance in the sand"*.

Fans of retro-styled chamber pop should find the vibes here to be exquisite. That said, Mering cleverly balances the sumptuousness with a lyrical orientation that taps into a universal melancholy, cutting through the fog of nostalgia with a sober, contemporary sensibility.
Leah Kardos

billy woods x Messiah Musik
Church
Backwoodz Studioz CD/DL/LP/MC
Akai Solo
Spirit Roaming
Backwoodz Studioz CD/DL/LP
Spirit Roaming finds Akai Solo in an unusual place. The Brooklyn rapper has spent the past few years injecting underground rap with super Saiyan energy. He blends anime references, his gruff, nasally voice, and a healthy dollop of weedy metaphysics into music that feels triumphant, like Adonis Creed mastering the sweet science. But his arguably most high profile release to date finds him purposely adrift. The tip-off is an oft-circulated 2001 quote from the late Toni Morrison that kicks off second track "Mob Psycho 100": *"Uh, how do you get through? Sometimes you don't survive whole. You survive in part. But the grandeur of life is that attempt"*.

Morrison's sampled voice opens the door to Akai's spiritual torment and what he terms character building exercises. He multiplies dense metaphors on "Demonslayer" and builds an angry, punchy flow on "What's A Win?". *"I've got an overarching impact on environments/The function's on the inverse of positive"*, he ruminates on "SOM". His thoughts are so muddy that when he decides to repeat a verse near the end of that track, it's unexpectedly rousing, echoing a style he largely sets aside on *Spirit Roaming*. *"I do not endorse beef stock/No remorse recorded when I clean clocks"*, he rhymes emphatically.

By contrast, billy woods's latest album, a collaboration with producer Messiah Musik, finds him deepening his talent, shifting themes and perspectives from stanza to stanza as he offers memories of heartbreak, growing up in Zimbabwe and NYC, and picking apart corporate and colonial shitstems. Arriving a mere few months after his justly lionised *Aethiopes*, it suffers a bit in comparison, like dropping *Axis: Bold As Love* a few months after *Are You Experienced?*. The poetic lines and knotty constructions take time to absorb and unwind, a process at times antithetical to industry dictates.

"We was raised on paraquat, scraped and fought/By the grace of God, everyone else got caught", Woods chants on "Paraquat". Meanwhile, Messiah Musik conjures a noisy sound full of horns and skronk, thumped upright bass and dread vibes. The two tracks with woods's Armand Hammer partner Elucid, "Fuchsia & Green" and "Magdalene", feel like peak moments at a live jam. Leave it to the latter to boil the male id down to its essence: *"Suck my dick and tell me I'm beautiful"*.
Mosi Reeves

Xtended Vox
Various
SA Recordings CD/DL/LP
New York based sound composer and artist Lea Bertucci, whose music bridges performance, installation and multichannel activations of acoustic space, turns to the most primal of instruments, the voice, for this specially curated compilation. *Xtended Vox* features Audrey Chen, Phil Minton, Cansu Tanrikulu and Ben Vida, and is released in partnership with a Spitfire Audio voice library.

Recalling the vocal experiments of composers such as Beatriz Ferreyra and Alvin Lucier, the record is a stripped back miasma in which wordless utterances – screeches, screams, groans, grunts and moans – are transformed into chimerical creatures. The opening track "Drank Vs Dunk" begins with an inhale that explodes into breathy gasps and pants, splintering into layered upon layered wailing fragments of noise.

On "We Do Wish We Were with You: Part 1", Chen and Minton utilise radical techniques; throat singing, hoarse whispers and alien shrieks are churned, as if in a blender, producing inhuman half-machine sounds. The centrepiece, however, arrives with "Tulsa", made with Ben Vida. Both figureheads of the New York experimental scene, Bertucci and Vida previously collaborated on the 2022 album *Murmurations*, which incorporated live tape manipulation, modular synthesis, sampling and real-time instrumental and vocal improvisation.

These elements also come to the fore on "Tulsa", as pattering rain-like rhythms and flute meld with whistles, sighs and expulsions of breath. It's here that the *Xtended Vox* really comes alive; the vocalisations dance with the woodwind instruments and percussion, giving rise to a surreal soundscape which stands in testament to the power of the voice, expanded and extended beyond the limits of the human body through machine manipulation.
Hannah Pezzack

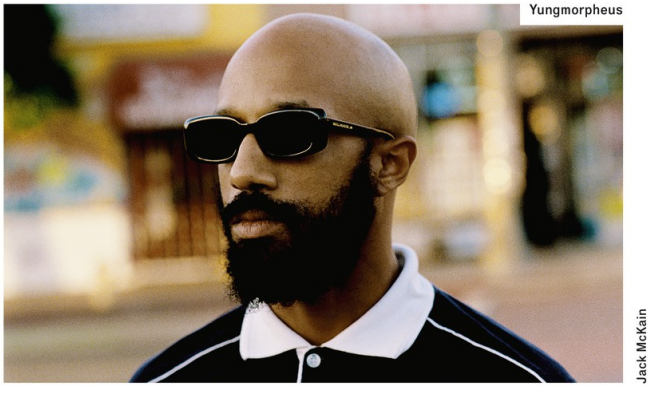
Yungmorpheus
Burnished Sums
Lex CD/DL/MC
In a 2021 interview with Bag Talk collaborator Pink Siifu, Yungmorpheus identified himself as part of a "New Black Renaissance" – a wave of artists across disciplines who are creating radical Black visions. The enigmatic Florida raised rapper often seems left out of those conversations, though. His low voice, deadpan delivery and fidelity to dreamscape-like sample backgrounds often find him misclassified alongside smoked out lo-fi neoclassicists like the Griselda and ALC universes, Boldy James, Curren$y, Roc Marciano, and others.

But Yungmorpheus's race consciousness, which often manifests itself in pungent references to *"honkies"* and *"crackers"* complicates that picture. He often sounds like he's battling something, even if his opponent feels more atmospheric than specific. His mission seems larger than merely accruing wealth, no matter how much bag talk he spouts.

On *Burnished Sums*, Yungmorpheus works with producers like August Fanon and Joe Armon-Jones, who craft lush, lo-fi beat loops out of 1970s and 80s R&B. Meanwhile, the MC expresses a preternatural cynicism and hardened life perspective: *"I had to tweak the style a bit, my old shit pretentious/Even if I told you how, you couldn't freak them sauces"*, he raps on "The Price Of Convenience".

At least he gives plenty of justification for his wariness. He observes how *"the pigs setting traps everywhere"*, an allusion to how aggressive prosecutors frequently use rappers' lyrics against them in the criminal justice system, with talented artists like Young Thug and Gunna caught up as a result. *"I think they trying to steal my soul through that black camera"*, he raps on "Head Above The Water", referencing an old Native American myth.

While less robust than 2020's *Affable With Pointed Teeth*, this six track EP continues Yungmorpheus's stylistic balancing act, toggling between the jazz-inflected flow of "Distant Place" and the street narrative "It's Stuck Now". It's not clear if he's building towards a statement of clarity or simply pumping out tracks and ideas as they come. There's music now; let the soul stealers figure it out afterward.
Mosi Reeves


Yungmorpheus
Jack McKain

The Columns

Avant Rock by Joseph Stannard

Adrian Belew
Elevator
Bliss/Ingrooves CD/DL
That fellow who made his guitar sound like a chicken for Frank Zappa, David Bowie, Talking Heads and King Crimson is back with an engaging set of politely weird avant pop. Belew's affection for The Beatles has never been a secret (he once covered their stitched together 1995 single "Free As A Bird", something only a bona fide Fabs fanatic would do) and it informs his songcraft to a considerable – though not overpowering – extent. What this means in practice is that these 12 songs provide a charming basis for Belew's six-string shenanigans, the balance between earworm catchiness and brain-tickling novelty struck most agreeably throughout. Everything is carefully put together, with "The Power Of The Natural World" and "You Can't Lie To Yourself" being especially lovely. Suffice to say that *Elevator* is lot more entertaining than the last 20 or so Crimson live albums. Stitch that, Bob!

Blind Illusion
Wrath Of The Gods
Hammerheart CD/DL/LP
Blind Illusion are probably best known as the band Les Claypool and Larry LaLonde were in before they formed Primus. Understandable – but the Bay Area thrash outfit deserve better, being possessed of an eccentric, progressive edge absent from most of their peers. *Wrath Of The Gods* is only their second studio album – their debut *The Sane Asylum* was released in 1988 – and it's almost as good an old school thrash comeback as Exhorder's 2019 masterwork *Mourn The Southern Skies*. Opener "Straight As The Crowbar Flies" is the standout, sounding like thrash metal interpreted by Edgar Broughton, guitarist and frontman Marc Biedermann's throaty vocal delivering surreally messianic proclamations over fluid but raw-edged riffing. *Wrath Of The Gods* won't get as much attention as Megadeth's recent *The Sick, The Dying… And The Dead!* but it's a lot more fun and feels a lot less forced.

Cheap Trick
Live At The Whisky 1977
Real Gone 4×CD/DL
Rockford, Illinois quartet Cheap Trick have, frankly, never belonged anywhere, and that's part of their appeal. Too smart and sarcastic for stadium rock, too heavy for pop, too tuneful for the punks; they were more successful in their late 1970s heyday than Big Star (whose "In The Street" they covered in the late 90s) – but then again, who wasn't? This four disc set gleaned from a 1977 residency at The Whisky in Los Angeles is mainly a showcase for the abrasive squall of guitarist Rick Nielsen. Higher in the mix and more powerful than on the studio records, Nielsen dominates each disc, generating fields of electricity that threaten to tear the songs apart from within. I can't help thinking this would appeal to admirers of Neil Young, Andy Gill and Keiji Haino – or anyone who likes to luxuriate in amplified noise.

Fontana Re:Mix
Traces Of Time
Bauta CD/DL
Influenced by John Cage, Frank Zappa and Henry Cow, the Swedish trio of Magnus Alexanderson, Björn Hellström and Lars Jonsson formed Fontana Mix in 1978. The band reformed as Fontana Re:Mix in 2018 and worked up this impressive 18 track collection from improvised sessions. The trio's stated influences are instructive – this is progressive rock shorn of frivolity and heavy on austere atmospherics, with nary a wizard's robe in sight and little approaching a tune. The band's dedication to generating a glowering miasma of sound has resulted in an album that engages as it overpowers, and their pitch black seriousness is refreshing.

The Gatekeepers
The Gatekeepers
Think Like A Key CD/DL/LP
Soundtrack composer Alex Wroten sits squarely at the centre of this unusual ensemble project featuring vocal contributions from The Residents, R Stevie Moore, Bob Drake and Cheer-Accident alongside instrumental assistance from members of Tuxedomoon, 10cc, Add N To (X) and Rhys Chatham Ensemble. The concept of the album is concerned with the struggle of artists to get their work noticed by "sardonic, disinterested gatekeepers" and retain artistic freedom in an era of cynical marketing initiatives. Much of the music reminds me of Toy Matinee and other Kevin Gilbert projects – it has that 1980s US prog feel – and while the movement from song to song could be more dynamic in order to better serve the narrative, Wroten's commitment to the bit is admirable, as is his songwriting on tracks like "The Professional", "The Algorithm" and "All The Way To The Bank".

Obituary
Dying Of Everything
Relapse CD/DL/LP/MC
Now on their 11th studio album, Florida death metal institution Obituary are still capable of inspiring awe. *Dying Of Everything* – fantastic title – isn't quite business as usual and it's hard to put one's (severed) finger on what elevates this album above their past couple of efforts. It could be that the energy stored up over the lockdowns of 2020–21 has given the new material a particularly bloodthirsty edge. Then again, perhaps revisiting their first two albums (1989's *Slowly We Rot* and 1990's *Cause Of Death*) for a couple of live streams facilitated a reconnection to first principles. Whatever the reason, the band have birthed a tight 45 minute record with zero flab and even a couple of potential classics in the form of the grimly psychedelic "The Wrong Time", the lava-like "Without A Conscience" and the apocalyptic "War".

ONO
Kate Cincinnati
American Dreams DL/LP
The Chicago outfit consolidate their recent return to action with a 40th anniversary reissue of their 1982 debut album, and it's strong meat indeed, catching their early trio formation (P Michael Grego, Ric Graham, travis) as they negotiate what sounds like a cold and cavernous warehouse space, shifting air with clattering percussion, spindly guitar and echo-laden vocal irruptions. It's noise, it's industrial, it's improv, it's blues – it's ONO ferfucksake. Essential, obviously.

Todd Rundgren
Space Force
Cleopatra CD/DL/LP/MC
One of rock's most mercurial returns with an LP's worth of collaborative tunes. 2017's *White Knight* took a similar tack, with contributions from Trent Reznor, Dam-Funk, Donald Fagen and others, but the hit rate here is higher, each participant bringing their essence to the table. Particularly effective are the hookups with Sparks (the flamboyant "Your Fandango"), Adrian Belew (the dreamy "Puzzle"), Neil Finn (the wistful, slinky "Artist In Residence") and Thomas Dolby (the rubbery "I'm Not Your Dog") but The Roots, Cheap Trick's Rick Nielsen, The Lemon Twigs, rapper Narcy and Steve Vai also put in welcome appearances. To these ears at least, Rundgren's finest since 2008's *Arena*. ☐

Todd Rundgren

Critical Beats by Joe Muggs

Patrick Cowley
Malebox
Dark Entries CD/DL/LP
The quantity and quality of music still being unearthed from the late San Francisco producer Patrick Cowley's archives continues to be dizzying – and not just out of nostalgia value by any means. Following albums of his woozy porn soundtracks and some distinctly lo-fi funk demos, these six tracks from 1979–81 are right back to the dancefloor and each and every one is dazzling. "Love Me Hot" is the platonic ideal of a hi-NRG synth sizzler that can sit alongside the best in the alt disco zone between Tom Tom Club and Ze Records, and "Low Down Dirty Rhythm" does what it says on the tin. All are packed with synths that bubble and gurgle with lysergic resonance, and all are still fully viable bangers.

Giant Swan
Fantasy Food
Keck DL/12"
Bristol dance duo Giant Swan's records somehow manage to feel as sweaty as their raging, riotous live sets. It helps that three of the five tracks here are punctuated with gasps, hiccups and other half-vocalisations that trigger breathlessness and thus adrenaline. But even without them, the sounds are enough to evoke and provoke mania. Concrete kickdrums build a cage for riffs that roar and pulsate, constantly erupting in little pustulations of self-resonation, threatening to burst completely but then regaining control. Aside from the weird voice edits, we're kind of in the territory of Subhead, Tobias Schmidt, Dave Tarrida and all those producers who kept bestial fun alive in techno and tore up raves, yet have been written out of history by its establishment. With the voices, though, we're somewhere new.

ILHA
Lava Around The Floating Island
Ransom Note DL
This Canadian-Mozambican collaboration constantly sounds familiar but leaves you stranded in strange places. "Diri" gurgles and chatters with the ambience of a chillout in San Francisco or Brixton circa 1993, but the half-manifested juddering beat in the second half dislodges you from any cultural memory. "MA118" steadily builds an analogue chug that is a bit like the early 80s Italian sound

which A Love From Outer Space rewired for the 21st century, but it's enveloped in a whole other track of gloop and gurgle that operates according to different physics. "Seawall" is just an arpeggio, but bizarrely complex, and "Tars"… well, "Tars" has a spoons-playing alien that leads you into the heart of a swamp. It's all very peculiar.

J-Shadow
Final Departure
Keysound DL/LP
We're in familiar territory for London based label Keysound here: very broadly, high gloss, high detail cyberpunk grime, with jagged clap and snare patterns and big hollow square waves playing off high-definition sound design and Vangelis style eerily romantic synth chords. It conjures huge future cities, space flight, inhuman scale, virtual worlds, with MCs' voices and those bass tones blasting through like echoes of street level humanity trying to keep a footing among the dizzying technology. We've been in this world before thanks to the likes of Logos and indeed Keysound founders Dusk and Blackdown, but there's plenty more to say, and J-Shadow does it with style, especially on the almost beatless eight minute mind movie "Altered Memoirs", and when 90s hiphop and jungle burst their way into the mix in "Chronic (The Ascent)".

DJ Lag & Que DJ
Where's Your Father
Amagogogo DL
"Where's your mother? Where's your father? Where's your brother? Where's your sister? Where's your future?": it's a classic discombobulating rave refrain that would sound perfectly in place pitched down in an acid or techno record of the mid-1990s. But this is 2022, and Durban star Que of Distruction Boyz is chanting it over a turbocharged gqom rhythm, a huge syncopated bass and crash cymbals leading, screeching rushes and dog bark percussion punctuating it all. It sounds simultaneously like a panic attack and a call to arms, instantly familiar yet thrillingly new, and it's the straight up strobe-lit delirium anthem of the year.

Munchi
I Love Mambo Mixtape + Mambo Detonao EP
Nyege Nyege Tapes DL/MC
Dominican-Dutch producer Rajiv Münch personifies the globalisation of dance music. He was instrumental in the explosion of moombahton around 2010, where Latin-Caribbean sounds merged with and drew out the diasporic influences on Euro electro house and proto-EDM. Since then he's spread across continents, tempos and styles, but here he's returned to his Dominican roots with 150 bpm-plus four to the floor techno-mambo mania. Airhorns, radio samples, rinky-dink keyboards, clashing congas all powering along without build or drop: it's the antithesis of EDM spectacle, and all the more joyous for it.

Aurora Dee Raynes
Good For You (Shy One Remix)
Tru Thoughts DL/12"
Once again Shy One continues to throw light on the seething interactions of post Plastic People London, in which lineages of hardcore, pirate and sound system music find new ways to interact with the soul-jazz continuum. The original here, from a North London duo, is postivity-espousing neosoul with lovely rolling electro bass and claps – think Jill Scott mixed by Mantronix. On the remix, Shy boosts everything. The rollage is emphasised by a rattling break with half-time undercurrent that is bruk, junglist and post-dubstep at the same time. The electro is amplified with glossy UR sci-fi chords. Tiny synth sax blips echo New Jersey via London garage, and there are hovering pads and giant subs reinforcing good old fashioned rave values.

Daniel Savio
Phase II
Flora & Fauna DL/LP
Something about proximity to graffiti writer culture seems to correlate with understanding the most enduring essences of electronic production. And that holds true from Miami to Malmö. To use recent examples just from Nordic countries, DJ Sotofett from Norway and Luke Eargoggle and Jean Louis Huhta from Sweden, all with graffiti connections, have hit rich veins of funk in their techno. Now Savio, another Swede, has paid tribute to OG writer Phase II with these nine tracks of the purest electro that distil purest essences of Kraftwerk and Cybotron into new pigments to paint with. It doesn't take a synaesthete to hear the swoops and squiggles of a spraycan arm tracing wild style lines in the chirps and warbles here.

Robag Wruhme
Speicher 123
Kompakt DL
Back in the early 2000s Kompakt, along with Get Physical, mapped out a classier version of then dominant electrohouse, letting tracks be big, swishy and maximal while retaining some elegance. This has latterly been codified as melodic techno and all too often got really boring – but some still keep the faith in big shiny pumpers as a vehicle for fun sound making. Robag Wruhme here isn't quite as weird or boinky as he used to be back in the day, but he knows how to keep the fancy chords and arpeggios rooted with a big, dumb one/two note bassline. "Fire" is all relentless build to a climax that's somehow like having a refined conversation while dancing wildly; "Un-spoke-en" is marginally more delicate and more about tension, with a long breakdown before a second half that sounds like "Flat Beat" with trance angels gliding around above it. □

Dub & Reggae by Steve Barker

Patrick Andy
Living In Mount Zion
Pressure Sounds CD/DL/LP
This posthumous release is also the debut solo album from Patrick Andy (1960–2022). The title track was released in 1977 as a 7" on Yabby You and King Sounds' Grove Music in the UK. These are top quality roots productions and it's a mystery why they were never issued in the mid-1970s when they were recorded. Pressure Sounds' longterm relationship with the family estate of Vivian Jackson aka Yabby You has certainly paid dividends here, especially on tracks like "Youths Of Today", with its great dub version, and also the cover version of namesake Horace Andy's "Love Of A Woman". The two singers were paired on the album *Clash Of The Andys* in 1985 – of course, the younger singer owes the Studio One stalwart a debt of gratitude for mirroring his style.

Ja-Man Allstars
King's Dub
Manzie LP
The dub counterpart to General Echo's excellent 1979 *Rocking & Swing* album recorded and mixed by Dudley 'Manzie' Swaby – brother of Augustus Pablo – at Channel One, alongside a stellar bunch of engineers: Crucial Bunny, Maxie, Soljie Hamilton, Ernest Hookim and Ranking Barnabas. Reissued by Manzie in 2005 and still only available on vinyl, it's a necessary but expensive set, released as a Jammyland press from NYC cut on heavy vinyl. As expected from the line-up of Sly & Robbie, Horsemouth, Flabba, Bingy Bunny, Skully, Sticky, Gladstone Anderson, Theophilius Beckford and majestic horns from Bobby Ellis, Herman Marquis, Deadly Headley, Tommy McCook and Don Drummond Jr, this is a wonderful dub set, one to convert the heathen, with a rare clarity and depth in the mix and refreshed classic riddims from "Get In The Groove" for "Censemania", "Ba Ba Boom" for "Nuclear Bomb" and "Skylarking" for "Hot Steppers Dub".

Larry & Alvin
Poor Man A Feel It
Jamaican Art LP
Larry Marshall and Alvin Leslie are probably best know for their two Studio One hits, 1968's "Nanny Goat" and "Throw Mi Corn", belatedly released in 1971, both of which became immortal as sources for countless versions over the years. The history of their unreleased 1978 set is fraught with bad luck, bad judgments and bad timing. Backing tracks were laid by The Revolutionaries at Channel One when they were at the height of their powers; the voicing and technical mixing was done at the Harry J Recording Studio on 16-tracks by Sylvan Morris after he left Studio One. The ten track album is a mix of quality roots and lovers. At the time Larry Marshall was recording as a successful solo artist, when his delivery had achieved a soulful and intense depth. Heavily influenced by his Revival church background, his voice elevated the songs into a top drawer status.

Overnight Players
Shaka Part One/Part Two/Kunta Kinte's Revenge Part 1/Part Two
Cha Cha 12"
A welcome return for the legendary Harlesden based Cha Cha label, run by Errol Dystant, which put out 50-odd high quality reggae 12"s in the late 1970s and early 80s, mixing lovers and roots, and UK and Jamaican artists. This massive tune was first revived by Pressure Sounds on a Channel One compilation but fully deserves this 12" cut: the Overnight Players' "Shaka The Great" appeared on the now rare 1980 *Babylon Destruction* album. It's a fully proud, strident steppers tune with a triumphant horns section led by the great Clive Hunt, plus a "Part Two". But the real bonus here is the inclusion of two previously unreleased mixes of the rightly lauded "Kunta Kinte" – here retitled "Kunta Kinte's Revenge" – one of the few well known dub plates accorded legendary status courtesy of their championing by Jah Shaka. Both these versions are actually remixes of Creole's "Jah Creation" and "Beware Of Your Enemies" respectively – heavy, heavy roots tunes usually freely available via decent pressings on Well Charge 7" singles.

Perilous meets Nat Birchall/Manasseh
Zinc Fence Rock/Dub Shack
Selection Train DL/7"
Longtime London selector Jerry 'Perilous' Davies runs Selection Train. Named after The Soul Defenders tune, the label specialises in recreation of roots sounds in a modern style. The zinc fence is a recurring reggae meme and there are many images of reggae artists posing moodily inna yard against the grey corrugated perimeter. Here "Zinc Fence Rock" is a driving digi-roots instrumental with North West jazzman and longtime roots reggae supporter Nat Birchall utilising his soprano sax skills. Blowing sweet, clean and free on a Perilous riddim, he's backed by the keys of Iñaki Yarritu of influential dub outfit Basque Dub Foundation, alongside Charles 'Nightdoctor' Wood responsible for the seminal 1981 UK steppers "Menelik". On the flip is "Dub Shack", a one-away dub mix roughed up by veteran UK dubmaster Nick Manasseh.

Devon Russell
Darker Than Blue
333/Death Is Not The End DL/LP
What better album to launch 333, a label dedicated to reissues of rare and foundational digi, roots and soul, than this album by Devon Russell? Limited to just 333 copies, *Darker Than Blue* is his tribute to Curtis Mayfield. Russell first cut "We The People Who Are Darker Than Blue" as a single for Earl 'Chinna' Smith's High Times label in 1980, with a sublime version "Stand In Your Glory" on the flip. The following year he recorded a take of Mayfield's "Move On Up", once more utilising a natural near falsetto vocal. Blood & Fire's Steve Barrow suggested Russell go with a Curtis covers album after hearing his version of "Give Me Your Love". So, with old friend Sly Dunbar, he took King Tubby's Firehouse Crew session men into Leggo Studios to record the album, first released in 1993 on Devon's own CS Sweetest label. It should be said there was an equally essential CD version with a take of "Wild And Free" deejayed by Papa Finigan.

The Sky Nations
Medley Dub
Music On Vinyl/High Note LP
Back in 2022 this old High Note set of rocksteady versions was reissued on CD by Doctor Bird, incongruously coupled with *Culture Dub*, a collection of the vocal group's roots dubs recorded for Sonia Pottinger, over music performed by The Revolutionaries. What the two sets have in common is all the tracks were engineered and dubbed by Errol Brown. So, for the benefit of those who believe dub is best heard analogue, this heavyweight pressing is a welcome addition. It contains a series of the finest sides produced by Duke Reid for his Treasure Isle label, given the most cultural and restrained dub treatment by Brown.

U-Roy featuring Skin, Flesh & Bones
Dread In A Africa
Jamaican Art LP
With its first few releases, Fred Lentjes's Netherlands based Jamaican Art imprint has established a new gold standard for revive reggae. This rare hit album from U-Roy is a case in point, the A side features vocal tracks and the B side includes dubs, but not of the tracks on the A side! Recorded at Dynamic Sounds, Randy's and Joe Gibbs Studio, produced and arranged by Alvin 'GG' Ranglin, it's now mastered from the original master tapes. On opener "Children Of Jah Jah" U-Roy effortlessly rides the riddim of Gregory Isaacs's hit tune "Love Is Overdue", followed by "Move Out Of Pharoah Land" on "Financial Endorsement". Another Ranglin classic, The Mighty Maytones' "Madness", is used for "Dread In A Earth"; but the set's standout track is "Dreadlocks In A Africa" on the riddim of "Hello Carol" by The Gladiators. ☐

Electronics by Emily Bick

Common Ground Vol 2
Various
Safe Ground DL/MC
This is the second instalment of LB Marszalek's benefit compilation in aid of refugees and sea-watch NGOs, featuring "ambient, experimental, and field recordings". So it feels churlish to complain that this time around it sounds like several of the contributors took the theme of migrant boats too literally: lots of wispy, drifting pads and static bobbling like buoys in fog. The marimba and floating street conversation on Nyokabi Kariuki's "Sunset In Nairobi" offer some interest, as does the guitar figure at the end of "Strikethrough" by Rafael Anton Irisarri (featuring Benoit Pioulard). The most interesting is Sabiwa's spectral "In The Mood Of Valencia"– a spooky child's chant rattles around with jars full of change and the odd piano note, followed by a woman's voice layered with ghostly recorders. It's for a good cause, but the first volume might be a better port of call.

Forbidden Overture
Turned On!
Dark Entries DL/LP
Dark Entries continue their indefatigable efforts in bringing long lost synthesizer scores for gay porn films to a wider audience. Here their detective work paid off: composer Forbidden Overture turns out to be the pseudonym of Man Parrish. Composed for the 1982 bathhouse film *Turned On!*, its two sidelong tracks take the propulsive urgency of Parrish's electro tracks like "Heatstroke", stripping the cowbells and vocoders, and adding steamy, slow build arpeggiation and glide. The drip-pulse and queasy chords cresting behind "Primal Overture" are unbalancing and melancholic in the best possible way.

Heinali
Live From A Bomb Shelter In Ukraine
Injazero DL
Heinali is Ukrainian musician Oleh Shpudeiko. Forced by the war to leave Kyiv in early 2022, he reached Lviv, where he and his musician friends organised a series of fundraising broadcasts. Even in Lviv, no one was safe: "As the air raid alarms grew more frequent," Shpudeiko writes, "We had to cancel or postpone live streams until we settled on broadcasting the next performance from a bomb shelter nearby." This half hour set is based on Organa, an album Shpudeiko was working on before the Russian occupation. It's a suite for modular synthesizer based on medieval polyphonic compositions. In any other circumstance, his rippling arpeggios and stately drones would evoke otherworldly transcendence; here they become an eloquent riposte to Putin's invasion. It's cosmic music for the ages that suggests resilience: this too must pass.

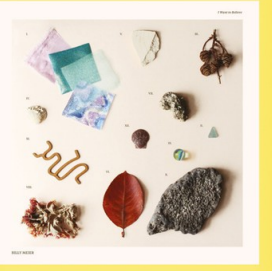
Plaid
Feorm Falorx
Warp CD/DL/LP
Plaid are back with another album of music that twists geometric runs through nostalgic synth textures into minor key shifts like dimension folds gone wrong. "Perspex" and companion piece "Return To Return" twinkle with icy harpsichord, flute and music box tessellations. "Wondergan" combines steel drums with deep organ squelch, calling to mind a stodgier version of Röyksopp's "Eple". Elsewhere, "Nightcrawler" with Mason Bee, twists around a breathy, high-pitched voice that's stuttered and submerged like a milder Carl Stone experiment.

Rian Treanor & Ocen James
Saccades
Nyege Nyege Tapes DL/LP
During a 2018 residency at Kampala's Nyege Nyege studios, producer Rian Treanor and Acholi fiddle player Ocen James collaborated on a series of improvisations. Treanor modelled a digital instrument based on the sounds of the a'dungu arched harp and the nah, and James contributes several star turns on the rigi rigi, a one-string violin, especially "Rigi Rigi", where a frantic jig is set in polyrythmic counterpoint to Treanor's robot scrapyard percussion. On "Bunga Bule" and "As It Happens" James's playing sounds like a sentient alien creature, as it whinnies, scrapes and squelches in dialogue with Treanor's tactile rhythms. "The Dead Centre" is all whirling minimalist glee, built around James's looping string figure and Treanor's enveloping drone. Both players ping and jangle and bounce new timbres off every available surface in a startling and electric meeting of minds.

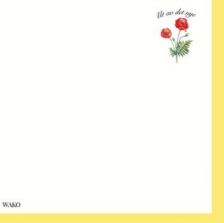
Zaliva-D
Misbegotten Ballads
SVBKVLT DL/LP
Beijing based duo Zaliva-D are at their best in a live AV performance setting; listening to Li Chao's audio without Aisin-Gioro Yuanjin's eyeball-melting visuals is like listening to a Sculpture album without watching their 3D turntable animations. It's not quite the full overwhelming experience, but still full of texture, full of drama. "Hun Shou Qiang Qiang" is a skulking dub caper, with a disturbing vocal that sounds like Kermit The Frog after a few spliffs and a one-note synth line that's fuzzed out like a dying stylophone. "Mian Ru Er Tiao Tiao" is a humid dungeon synth track with tension added by an ill-sounding electronically altered trumpet. ☐

New releases at Øra Fonogram
– The finest Norwegian jazz music

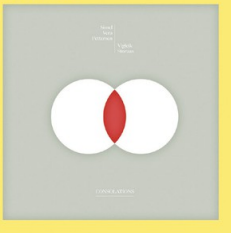
Billy Meier
I Want to Believe



Wako
Ut av det nye



Sissel Vera Pettersen & Vigleik Storaas
Consolations



Mona Krogstad
Virgo Sun

Upcoming releases:
Kongle Trio - ***Live at Moldejazz***
Aksel Rønning Trio - ***ART's Organized Garden***

www.orafonogram.no
ØRA Fonogram

Hiphop & R&B by John Morrison

Awon & SOUL.DOPE
Infinite Wisdom
Don't Sleep CD/DL/LP
Virginia born MC Awon links up with Los Angeles producer SOUL.DOPE, hitting us with 13 tracks of liberatory hiphop. Opener "Infinite Wisdom" finds Awon and Napoleon Da Legend trading verses that evoke the warm nostalgia of 1990s Black pop culture while burning with the immediacy of revolution. "The Chosen" is built on crunchy drums, sweet guitars and a dreamy synth melody. Awon's verses here are laidback and understated while the hook *"Everywhere I go, the people show me love"* ties it all together. "Stolen Peace" is a soulful, headnodding track. Awon speaks about his younger days running the streets and going to prison before updating on his life today, filled with love and good times.

Coco & Clair Clair
Sexy
Nice Girl World/Alternate Side/Many Hats Distribution DL
At the end of the "Work Ethic!" episode of the TV show *Atlanta*, "Wishy Washy" – a 2020 song by ATL rap duo Coco & Clair Clair – played as the final credits rolled. With its trippy synth motif, playful lyrics and slick Iggy Pop references, "Wishy Washy" provided a look into the group's odd and singular musical world. *Sexy* takes us even deeper into that world with more quirky songs about partying and beats that encompass vibey trap and dancey electronic pop. In an era when so much popular music leans toward maximalist overkill, Coco & Clair Clair's exuberant and coquettish songs blend perfectly with the colourful lo-fi production.

Dumhi
Uncle Miles
Dumhi CD/DL
Dumhi is a collective led by producer and guitarist Haj. Active since the 2000s, Haj has worked with rap heavyweights like Elucid and Reef The Lost Cauze. *Uncle Miles* builds upon that collaborative spirit, enlisting the help of Michele QJ, Ethel Cee and Terrence Wood for a fresh meeting of R&B and hiphop. "Magic" supports singer Michele QJ's seductive vocal with bitcrushed drums and lovely guitar and keyboard chords. "Slide" is a slow Al Green/Willie Mitchell-style ballad, while "Honey" (featuring Ethel Cee, Belli and Michele QJ) is a fun, bluesy hiphop love song.

Nas
King's Disease III
Mass Appeal CD/DL/2×LP/2×LP+CD+MC
Nas has spent the past two decades plus building a catalogue rife with inspiring highs and disappointing lows. *King's Disease III* is the latest in a series of albums helmed by the producer Hit-Boy and continues what has been hailed as the rapper's return to form. "Ghetto Reporter" opens the album with the energy at ten. Over a bouncy, staccato beat, Nas takes aim at the record industry and the parasitic executives who pressured him and countless other artists to twist their sound in the interests of commerce: *"Scarred by A&Rs, the music be changing and the culture be shifting and you gotta move with it"*. "Legit" keeps up the momentum with its beautifully chopped vocal and piano samples. Throughout the album Nas sounds engaged, and his choices are unbeholden to the whims of the market.

J Period
Mixtapes Are Not A Crime
Truelements DL/USB
Brooklyn based DJ/producer J Period is a master at creating tasteful edits that meld a cappellas, samples and beats into an intriguing whole. *Mixtapes Are Not A Crime* is a short (seven tracks) but powerful argument for the edit as a form of practical magic. The tape opens with "Ready Or Not, Here I Come" that combines introduces Kaytranada and Lauryn Hill to the dramatic orchestral arrangement that Thom Bell crafted for The Delfonics way back in 1968. "Electric Breakadawn" is a slick blend of the verses from De La Soul's "Breakadawn" and the music from A Tribe Called Quest's "Electric Relaxation". *Mixtapes Are Not A Crime* is a fun reminder of how sampling and hiphop-style DJing connect so much history and musical geography.

Truck North
Where The Wolf Lives
Bandcamp DL
A fiery journey through the life and mind of Philly born, roots-affiliated lyricist Truck North. The album opens on a seemingly celebratory note with "Other Side Of The Tracks" and its grand piano fanfare. Truck's flow on the track is commanding, and his bars offer vivid snapshots of violence, loss and triumph alongside some slick wordplay. "Hippie Age" opens with a sweeping string sample with a lone voice declaring: *"Hard times… we can get over"*. From here, Truck North enters, painting intricate rhymes over a delicate piano sample. Throughout its 16 tracks *Where The Wolf Lives* is based on a simple and powerful formula. The subtle, sample based production from Rok Bottom, E and J Miller provides a lush background for Truck North's dramatic and introspective verses. A dynamic and harrowing listen. □

Jazz & Improv by Bill Meyer

Rodrigo Amado
Refraction Solo
Trost CD/DL
Staunchly committed to collective improvisation, Rodrigo Amado has repeatedly defined himself in collaboration with such singular instrumentalists as Joe McPhee and Alexander von Schlippenbach. After Covid-19 parked him at home, the tenor saxophonist staved off the boredom of soloing alone by working bits of the music he had loved when he first got serious about the horn into his practice routine. *Refraction Solo* is an on the nose description of this process. Beginning with a slowed down statement of the opening passage from Sonny Rollins's *Freedom Now Suite*, he splays out a series of techniques and fragmented quotes, and then pulls it back together with another Rollins theme. The recording was done in a resonant church and the venue's acoustics bring out the absolute best in his sound, by turns gleaming hard and luxuriantly woolly. Still, this performance feels more like a testament of allegiance than an advance of Amado's art. Consider it a starting point.

The Chicago Plan
For New Zealand
Not Two CD/DL
German multi-reedist Gebhard Ullmann and New York trombonist Steve Swell have maintained a quartet together since 2004, but after recruiting then Chicagoans Fred Lonberg-Holm (who has since moved to Kingston, New York) and Michael Zerang, they renamed the band after their more than a rhythm section. Lonberg-Holm's electronically enhanced cello transitions easily between bass duties, pungent orchestral flourishes and rock-encrusted textures; Zerang likewise toggles between time-keeping and sculpted noise. The horn players' compositions take full advantage of this versatility, running the gamut from a funereal dirge to pointillistic chamber music. The album's title mourns the victims of a racially motivated assault upon a mosque in Christchurch, New Zealand; this international ensemble's collaborative approach shows by example that there's a better way.

Niklas Fite & Joe Williamson
Amphibians
Tilting Converter CD/DL
It seems a little wrong to apply the modifying phrase good old-fashioned to the words free improvisation, but that's what's happening here. These Stockholm residents check idiomatic boxes well known to anyone who keeps a shelf of Incus CDs, but there's no denying their fluent command of free improvisation's vernacular. Fite's acoustic guitar switches mercurially between lacerating harmonics, crab-walking advances and blink and you'll miss 'em rhythmic flourishes; Williamson's double bass issues abrupt, earthmoving shudders and stabs that'll blow the dust out of your speakers.

Kirk Knuffke & Michael Bisio
For You I Don't Want To Go
No Business CD/DL
This is the second album to feature cornettist Kirk Knuffke and bassist Michael Bisio in 2022. While it doesn't have the majestic sweep of *Gravity Without Airs*, a Knuffke-led trio session with Matthew Shipp, the absence of a chordal instrument makes it a better showcase of the empathetic responsiveness that the bassist attains in Knuffke's company. The unbroken 36 minute long performance builds patiently. First Bisio's lucid pizzicato figures wreath a solemn statement for open horn, and then he strikes sparks as the cornettist rigorously unpacks the theme's implications. The duo fall into a more conventional lead and support dynamic once they arrive at a bluesy title composition of Knuffke's, which gives the album its title, but the tune's contours serve as a solid launching station for both parties to wax lyrically abstract for the album's remainder.

Joanna Mattrey & gabby fluke-mogul
Oracle
Relative Pitch CD/DL
If New York improvisors Joanna Mattrey and gabby fluke-mogul are indeed oracles, priestesses who pass on the advice of the antique deities, their lead instruction is this: rosin up your bow. The two string players (fluke-mogul plays violin; Mattrey, viola and Stroh violin, an instrument once used for pit orchestras in the days before outboard electrical amplification) press their strings near to the breaking point, using that tension to activate a sound spectrum that encompasses shuddering noise at one extreme and tiny rustles at the other. They draw on other forms of ancient wisdom, notably Appalachian fiddling, which coarsens their classical techniques quite satisfactorily. Their improvisations proceed with an unassailable logic, as each ring or scrape begets another not quite like it.

Gabriele Mitelli/John Edwards/Mark Sanders
Three Tsuru Origami
We Insist! CD/DL/LP
The act of folding an origami crane expresses hope for healing. If each of this album's nine tracks constitutes

one paper bird, it falls well short of the requisite 1000 needed to make a wish come true. Nonetheless, they transmit a shot of energy that transcends the expectations one might have of a trio that comprises two tirelessly jobbing, ever propulsive English improvisors and one hot horn player. Gabriele Mitelli's dalliances with harsh-toned soprano sax, cosmically disruptive electronics and melancholy crooning introduce variety, but the trumpet is his main instrument. Alternating between open and muted horn, he delivers condensed, rippling phrases that bounce expressions of transcendental yearning off the rhythm section's turbulent surfaces.

Torben Snekkestad/Søren Kjærgaard/ Tomo Jacobson
SPIRIT SPIRIT
Gotta Let It Out DL/LP
Saxophonist Torben Snekkestad and pianist Søren Kjærgaard released a splendid CD of muted, pure sound exploration midway through 2022. This LP, with fellow Danish based player Tomo Jacobson on bass, is paradoxically lighter, which makes it easier to trace the melodies that Kjærgaard and Snekkestad keep trying to move past each other like a couple of chess players. But that's just a matter of degree. The vibe remains brooding, each spare note or twisted phrase laden with portent.

Günter Baby Sommer & Raymond MacDonald
Sounds, Songs, And Other Noises
Clean Feed CD/DL
Chief among this session's virtues is the economy that each player exercises. Each of its 16 tracks zeroes in on a particular subset of sounds and methods: lightly touched cymbals and moist reed puffs on "Five Miniatures: No 5", loping log drum patterns and sweetly syncopated soprano figures on "Wooden Trail For Delicate Steps", a steaming free jazz steeplechase on "From Somewhere Else To Nowhere". Sommer may be a septuagenarian, but he has energy to spare when it's required, as well as a gift for making a solo on a subset of his kit speak as directly as a sturdy folk song. MacDonald is similarly direct and lyrical.

Chris Williams & Patrick Shiroishi
Sans Soleil II
Astral Spirits DL/MC
As brass musician Chris Williams and multi-saxophonist Patrick Shiroishi lean into the album title *Sans Soleil II*, one has to wonder what they see of themselves in Chris Marker's borrowed footage travelogue. Perhaps it's a similar awareness of a tradition that they know but won't allow themselves to be bound by. Together they smear sonorities and elongate tones, stirring their instrumental voices together like two cooks who instinctively hand each other the right spices from the shelf. □

Modern Composition by Julian Cowley

John Luther Adams
Sila
Canteloupe CD/DL
For 40 years, the music of John Luther Adams has mapped the sonic geography of the Arctic. During that period the significance of the region has shifted from archetype of remote wilderness to focal point for global ecological awareness. Adams now appears to be a composer especially attuned to the age in which we live. *Sila*, taking its name from an Inuit term meaning breath of the world, brings together The JACK Quartet, The Crossing choir and a large number of instrumentalists, each provided with their own set of materials and operating at their own pace, without a conductor. From the outset the music occupies its own place, pervaded by currents and waves, crossed by gusts and rumbles that bring dramatic inflection and resonant nuance to the prevailing air of stasis.

John Bischoff
Surface
Artefact CD/DL
Following 2021's *Bitplicity*, with its compelling music conjured from a combination of analogue circuitry and digital synthesis, John Bischoff has extracted from his archive a markedly different selection of no less compelling pieces, made during the mid-1990s. The Berkeley based experimentalist used MIDI System-Exclusive codes to draw from synthesizers a startling range of textured streams, tilting planes and turbulent masses of noise. Altering the parameters of sound production in real time, Bischoff steers the flow, modifying intensities and cultivating contrasts to project a sense of depth and substance, as well as continuous surface movement. The compositions reside in their initiating design; the performances, by a real virtuoso of live electronic and computer music, have direct and sustained impact.

Philip Glass
Piano Etudes, Book 1
Canteloupe CD/DL
Proving herself to be an outstanding interpreter of contemporary compositions for piano, Vicky Chow brings to this now familiar set of studies by Philip Glass the kind of expressive sensitivity that allows them to flourish. In her hands these pieces far transcend their ostensible status as technical exercises. Of course, the fascination with musical process and its functional operation that characterised early Glass works was soon superseded by an approach to composition that embraces emotional content. Rarely, however, has a recorded performance of his work been shaded with such subtle and convincing gradations of feeling as those Chow brings to even the most conceptually straightforward or starkly formal of these pieces.

Amelia Cuni
Mumbai 04.02.1996
Black Truffle DL/2×LP
Born in Milan, based in Berlin, Amelia Cuni possesses a wonderfully lucid voice, as may be heard from *The Lion's Throne*, her 2019 project with Terry Riley, or her more regular collaborations with saxophonist Werner Durand. Devotion to dhrupad, an ancient style of North Indian music, has long formed the pulsating heart of her vocal artistry. Cuni's spellbinding performance of three classical ragas is preserved on this crystal-clear recording from a 1996 concert in Mumbai. As she fashions this traditional music's sinuous contours and elaborates the inexhaustible intricacy of its fine detail, her singing retains such fluency, grace and apparent ease that it appears to be a natural outpouring, rather than a long practised and highly disciplined accomplishment.

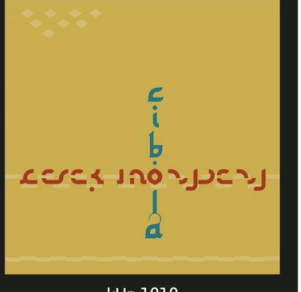
Rachel Grimes/Angélica Negrón/Shara Nova/Caroline Shaw/Sarah Kirkland Snider
The Blue Hour
New Amsterdam CD/DL
Boston based chamber ensemble A Far Cry commissioned *The Blue Hour*. A song cycle setting words from Carolyn Forché's poem *On Earth*, it involves a remarkable convergence of compositional perspectives. The voice of Shara Nova, transferred from the indie rock setting of My Brightest Diamond, takes on a pivotal solo role, relaying without a hint of melodrama words that pass through the mind of a woman in transition from life to death. The numerous movements of this cycle are stylistically diverse, matching the stages and reflections of the journey. The individual contributions of these five composers prove to be entirely complementary, and mutually enriching. Possible audiences arriving at this ambitious work from a broad range of musical directions might equally derive pleasure from its communicative economy and multifaceted coherence.

Finola Merivale
Tús
New Focus CD/DL
Finola Merivale, from County Cork, has been in recent years a postgraduate student at Columbia University. Living in New York, Merivale has also developed a highly constructive working relationship with Desdemona, a string quartet plus pianist who feature in various

2182 RECORDING COMPANY
September 2022
pre-order August 2022

kHz-1008
IDOL KO SI
LP + 12-inch Maxi single

kHz-1009
DIMINISHED MEN
Damage Mécanique
LP + 7-inch single



kHz-1010
DEREK MONYPENY
Cibola
LP + 7-inch single

TWENTY ONE EIGHTY TWO
RECORDING COMPANY
2182recordingcompany.com

configurations on her debut album *Tús* (in Irish, *Start*). The first of these five pieces, a hyperanimated string trio, provides an edgy and discomforting yet exciting and distinctive introduction to Merivale's soundworld. Mood and manner vary on other pieces, beginning with *Arbores Erimus*, part written, part improvised, where Adrianne Munden-Dixon's violin darts and glints amid electronic echoes and delay. Throughout this energetic, at times challenging set Merivale's intensity generates its own idiosyncratically expressive forms.

Mads Emil Nielsen
Black Box 3
Arbitrary CD/DL/LP
In November 2021, Copenhagen based composer Nielsen contributed the sound dimension for *Sprækker* [*Cracks*], a collaborative project involving dancers, lighting design and a video installation. Six pieces abstracted from it are preserved on *Black Box 3*. Recordings of processes in the natural world play a prominent role in Nielsen's designs, blended with synthesized atmospheres or in combination with Victor Dybbroe's percussion. Outside their multimedia context, these neatly crafted compositions are atmospheric but scarcely revelatory.

Susana Santos Silva
All The Birds And A Telephone Ringing
Thanatosis CD/DL/LP
A solo by Portuguese trumpeter Susana Santos Silva cuts through a typical ambient soundscape of a railway station. The preceding track features evocative creaks of a rickety vessel and mewing of gulls, along with various sounds that may be authentically derived from some maritime environment, or perhaps concocted using wind or percussion instruments. Her established voice, as a versatile improvisor, is expanded rather than abandoned here, combined imaginatively with other resources to explore in fresh ways the nature of sounds.

Jan Martin Smørdal & Øystein Wyller Oddens
Kraftbalanse
Sofa Music CD/DL
Norwegian artist Øystein Wyller Oddens created *Kraftbalanse* (*Power Balance*) in 2018 as an installation: an upright piano, agitated by channelled alternating current through exciter speakers. A year later in Oslo he collaborated with Jan Martin Smørdal. A similarly agitated grand piano was sympathetically accompanied by a string octet, equipped with voltmeters to track changes of frequency arising from fluctuations in the power supply. Two passages presented here are vivid and engrossing. Electrical vibrations undergo a form of reincarnation through an array of instrumental responses scored by Smørdal. Current anxieties regarding power supply add unanticipated resonance to this striking piece. ☐

Noise, Industrial & Beyond by Emily Pothast

Diminished Men
Damage Mécanique
2182 Recording Company kHz-1009 DL/LP
When David Lynch and Mark Frost revived *Twin Peaks* in 2017, the most disappointing thing about it was that they didn't tap instrumental rock stalwarts Diminished Men for a gig in the road house. Legendary in the Seattle underground for nearly two decades, Diminished Men deliver a Northwest noir counterpoint to the Dick Dale meets the Antichrist atmospherics that gave Angelo Badalamenti's soundtrack for the TV show's original run its sinister aura. *Damage Mécanique* feels even grittier and more unhinged than previous outings. It opens with a percussive nod to Portishead's (and/or Jimi Hendrix's) "Machine Gun" and spirals out from there, incorporating grinding noise into tremolo-heavy surf guitar and electro western grooves that court chaos without ever falling apart. An alarm-like pulse blares throughout "Panopticon" but the band play on, unsettlingly unphased.

Gamut Inc
Sum to Infinity
Morphine DL/LP
As Gamut Inc, Berlin based duo Marion Wörle and Maciej Śledziecki create custom-built, computer controlled instruments that performatively plink, clank, clatter and wheeze across the sonic spectrum. On the long awaited follow-up to their 2014 debut *Ex Machina*, they sculpt variegated compositions from layers of algorithmically animated kinesis. The album title refers to a mathematical operation that gives rise to Risset Rhythms – patterns which either speed up or slow down at an accelerating rate. Six enigmatic, alphabetically titled tracks build to the mind-scrubbing minimalism of "Series F", whose shapeshifting pulses resemble Ligeti's *Atmosphères* run through a square wave LFO.

Derek Jarman
Through The Billboard Promised Land Without Ever Stopping
purge.xxx MC
Nkisi
Avebury
purge.xxx LP
Two new releases from purge.xxx pay tribute to the life and work of English multimedia artist and film maker Derek Jarman (1942–1994). The first is an extremely limited cassette of Jarman reading his only piece of narrative fiction aloud, a surreal and prophetic tale that provided the foundation for much of his work across other media. The second is an LP from London based Congolese-Belgian producer Nkisi (aka Melika Ngombe Kolongo) comprising two sidelong tracks. The first was designed as a soundtrack for Stanley Schtinter's 2023 shot for shot remake of Jarman's 1973 Super 8 film of the Avebury stone circle. The second combines sounds evoking an ancient pagan ceremony with central African ritual to create an auditory pilgrimage that transcends physical location.

Junk DNA
Kopk Kopa
The Helen Scarsdale Agency CD/DL/MC
Whether as a member of Starving Weirdos and RV Paintings or solo as Ensemble Economique and now Junk DNA, Brian Pyle creates hypnotic compositions that both reflect and reward careful listening. While his work is always saturated with the dank coastal forest ambience of his Northern California home, more recently Pyle has also been spending time in Vilnius, Lithuania – a fact reflected in the title *Kopk Kopa*, which means climb the dune. Through eight patient, sprawling tracks that blend field recordings with glowing electronics, Pyle weaves a winding path to a scintillating summit. Along the way, bird songs mingle with the whine of a ghost on a rusty swing set; the sound of flowing water later resurfaces as crashing waves set against emotive organ swells.

This Immortal Coil
The World Ended A Long Time Ago
Ici D'Ailleurs CD/DL/2×LP
Twisted By Love
Ici D'Ailleurs CD/DL/LP
A follow-up to 2009's *The Dark Age Of Love*, *The World Ended A Long Time Ago* is an ambitious homage to Coil crafted by an ensemble of world-class composers and performers summoned by Ici D'Ailleurs founder Stéphane Grégoire. The album features dramatic pacing, sumptuous instrumentation, intimate textures and pellucid vocals. The bonus release *Twisted By Love* comprises remixes and alternate versions of the featured covers.

Maltash
Barki
Modular Mind DL/LP
Tarab's untranslatable concept has often been used to convey the communal qualities of the Levant's sacred and social music. With *Barki*, Lebanese artist Maltash (ملطش meaning wicked) uses industrial beats, distorted guitar, detuned synth squalls and half-chanted vocals to create post-Tarab music. By simultaneously citing and deconstructing Arabic wedding music to drone metal, Maltash draws a distinction between musical populism and noise's isolationist imaginings, conjuring heavy vibes that fuse emotionality with culturally situated critique. ☐

Size Matters by Byron Coley

Avarus
Salon Des Amateurs
Pome Pome MC
Avarus are a long-running Finnish collective, whose music was part of the first wave of Finland's underground explosion. Their sound is always large, usually psychedelic and mixes electronics and acoustics. *Salon Des Amateurs* was originally released as an LP a few years back, but this new tape sounds just ducky and allows for better nonstop play than vinyl. *Salon* is a wonderful jumble of sounds with lots of bloopsy synth parts and central pulse that is steady and hypnotic. Have a puff. With muff.

Bigcat
Atlas
Wormhole World MC
Solo project from Oakland, California that's full of synth drones and percussion, but expands to include guitar strokes and field recordings. There are even some small quivery portions sharing a mood with Mike Cooper's avant exotica experiments. The music goes all over the place, but without hurrying, and seemingly in full possession of its own mysterious identity.

Bhajan Bhoy
Shanti Shanti Shanti
Wormer Brothers MC
Another fine release by Dutch musician Ajay Saggar. His basic thrust is modern psychedelia, minted from radio snippets, dubby reverb flapping, elegant guitar washing, electronic drones interwoven with flashes of mock jaw harp or sploshy drums, and a generally stoned atmosphere. And the concept is spectrally sound!

Blues Ambush
Blues Ambush
Petty Bunco MC
Another very gear release from this Phildelphia trio (or so), whose aptitude with raunchy psych dynamics is abundantly clear from the first wah-wah'd chord burst. Three tracks of pure guitar spume in its most heavenly thud-like state. Imagine, if you will, Major Stars if they drove a lot faster and drank more beer. This is like that.

Sian Brie
Live
Orgone Dealers MC
Excellent solo guitar set by this post-form player, recorded live in the Romanian

capital of Bucharest. The music flows through a variety of clattery modes. Some of it reminds me a bit of the machine rhythm racket Thurston Moore used to make when he first went free. But there's also a distinct post-Bailey angle to the attack and some doubling of upper splange and lower splurge that's extremely cool. Just noticed that Brie plays on London Improvisers Orchestra's *Twenty Years On* session, as well. Time to play catch up.

Richard G Chamberlain
Entrenchment Sands Void Costal
RGC MC
Lancashire based guitarist Richard G Chamberlain is known for his work with Bridget Hayden in the Schisms organization. That band has an exquite and delicately brut approach to post-form art rock, and Chamberlain's solo work is of a piece. A mix of semi-quiet and very ornery electric guitar pieces with some mouth action worked in now and then. The effect is coarse without being harsh, and has a delicately spinning dizziness near its centre that I find highly appealing.

Colonel Truth & The Berkeley Street Gurus
Nudity
Independent Woman 8"
1995 recording of a Bay Area octet I'd never heard of, even though it includes folks from Caroliner, Thinking Fellers Union Local 282, etc. The music has a strange avant rock cabaret feel (especially the Gregg Turkington vocals on side two), and fits in well with a lot of the other stuff that was being done in the Bay around that time – probably one of the most exciting and least understood scenes of the last century.

Crazy Doberman
Free LSD
Working Man Lay Down MC
Cassette reissue of a 2018 LP by this Indiana based freak music collective. This is the early version of the band, in which John Olson was a member, but the abstract ruckus is nowhere near as noisy as one usually expects from Spykze. It's not exactly quiet and has a menacing build-up to what sounds like the release of a cloud of LSD vapour. And its aftermath. Which involves slow motion violence and a small circus filled with horns, bees and gum disease. Have a nice trip.

DIY Surgery
Frightening Examples Of Do-It-Yourself Surgery
Pleasure Principle 7" flexi
A one-sided serving of hideous voice noises from NYC artist Alex Bienstock. The work is a kind of raw sound poetry. If you didn't know the pieces were intentional, you might mistake it for one of those bizarre Folkways albums, like *Speech After Removal Of The Larynx*. Kind of insane. In a good (if not entirely pleasant) way.

Fadensonnen
Heretic Vision
Fadensonnen MC
Much less guitar on this tape than we've come to expect from this Illinois based project, which has added a percussionist and a key jammer for this new effort. There is still a good bit of loud stringwork, natch, but a lot of keyboard smudge and smarm creates a setting in which that guitar aktion occurs. Even when the axe is unhinged, there's a lot of other stuff going on. Even passages of acoustic pluckery! I guess multitasking is the new Fadensonnen thing. I approve.

Mike Khoury & Ben Hall
Blight In August
Sound Holes MC
Mike Khoury and Ben Hall are two stalwart figures on the contemporary Detroit underground improv scene. Both are capable of generating great gusts of noise, but on this tape they focus more on developing a landscape filled with ruralist avant textures. Khoury's violin playing occurs inside a small gesticular range, which has a sort of old-timey feel to it, as though it was being played as part of the soundtrack to a western film. Hall's electronics, while pretty new timey just as a matter of course, manage to evoke the sounds of a dust storm slowly gathering strength in the near distance. That's the first side, Hall switches to concert percussion on the flip, which gives proceedings a more new music/ avant jazz feel, although the outdoorsy edge remains.

Masche
Oxia Chaos
Cruel Nature Recordings MC
Second release by this excellent Italian collective, largely comprised of players with backgrounds in free jazz, punk and experimental musics. *Oxia Chaos* is said to have been inspired by the writing of sci-fi author Ray Bradbury, and their approach is a very cool jazz/rock hybrid (without being jazz rock). Casual vocals (almost like MX-80 in terms of function), large ass saxophone gronk, and slippery free rock rhythm dynamics, with electronc dabbling tossed across the top. It's a really great sound with occasional flashes recalling the wilder end of the Canterbury spectrum.

Maximum Ernst
Elimination Prince In Grim Limbo
Ever/Never MC
More solid slunk by this Manhattan duo. This time the music sounds like a mostly instrumental suite (apart from some almost found sounding vocals), based on the idea that Suicide were way too contained. Musically, at least. There's nothing like the mania of Alan Vega's jumbo vocals, but parts of this take some of Martin Rev's musical notions, throw them into a psychedelic blender and turn the speed way up.

Miro-Benjamin Lindstrom
Ö
Sitrus Tapes MC
Second release but the first one I've heard from this Finnish multimedia artist. The instrumental music here was generated by organ, cello and various synths, and it really makes me recall the sense of Eno's solo work following *Another Green World*. This means it has both trad prog and German tone flourishes, moving with a weirdly serious elegance. There's a bit of Heldon's radiance to the proceedings as well. Very neat work.

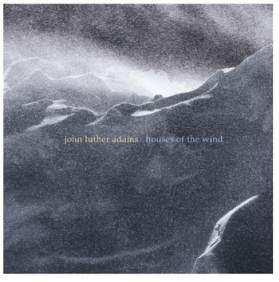
Mordwaffe
That's Also Practice
Freuyd & Verdrusz MC
Archival material from a defunct Glasgow quintet, who played in a style redolent of New Zealand's South Island sound. This means a good dab of The Velvet Underground plus a lot from bands who learned various (sometimes contradictory) lessons from Lou and co. There's also a ranginess to these crude rehearsal recordings that puts one in mind of early 80s UK sub-underground churning, but the NZ vibe is quite distinct and very lovely. Truly fine sounds. Here come the waves.

Onyon
Onyon
Trouble In Mind MC
Reissue of the debut cassette by this German quartet, whose sound quivers in the great Neue Deutsche Welle tradition, while allowing a certain US synthwave herkery to manifest itself as well. This has similarities to what some current Australian bands are doing, vis-à-vis updating electro-punk traditions. But it really has an out of time vibe, and the use of guitar has a Devo-esque quality that should be applauded.

Jake Kīanō Skinner & Noel Meek
Whakaaro
Fort Evil Fruit MC
Prolific New Zealand musician and label head Noel Meek has been involved in quite a few avant hootenannies over the years. Skinner is a Christchurch based composer whose work is new to me. On this tape, Skinner plays a variety of Maori flutes and percussion instruments, while Meek uses a no-input mixing board as his instrument. The pieces are on the intimate side and abstract, with the sounds serving as a kind of conversation about different schools of meditative practice. Both seem very open to letting silence speak for itself at times, and their sonic approaches (one quite warm, the other more squeaky) are suprisingly congruent with each other. The blend of traditional and postmodern flows works real dang well. ☐

Send cassettes, 7"s, 10"s, etc for possible inclusion in Size Matters to: Byron Coley, PO Box 627, Northampton, MA 01062, US

new from Cold Blue music



John Luther Adams
Houses of the Wind

"John Luther Adams . . . one of the most original thinkers of the new century."—*Alex Ross, The New Yorker*

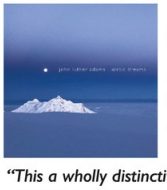
"His music has repeatedly conjured up visions of limitless expanse."
—Julian Cowley, *The Wire*

"His music becomes more than a metaphor for natural forces: it is an elemental experience in its own right.."—*Tom Service, The Guardian*

"It misses the point to say he is inspired by nature—Adams is changed by nature and his music is a catalogue of the places that changed him."—*New York Classical Review*

Houses of the Wind is shimmering, mesmerizing electro-acoustic music composed from a field recording of an aeolian harp strummed by the Arctic winds.

and recently released



John Luther Adams
Arctic Dreams

"This a wholly distinctive kind of minimalism that John Luther Adams has made his own."—*Financial Times*

John Luther Adams
Lines Made by Walking

"A spectralist tone poem built on overtones . . . achingly beautiful."
—*American Record Guide*

www.coldbluemusic.com

The Boomerang

New reissues and archive releases

Alterations

Up Your Sleeve

Paradigm Discs DL/LP

1980 was an interesting year for David Toop's Quartz label. While releasing records such as *Hekura* – Toop's own recordings of Yanomami shamanism from southern Venezuela – it also issued *Whirled Music*, his collaboration with Steve Beresford, Paul Burwell and Max Eastley, all key members of the improvisational scene which centred around the London Musicians Collective. In addition Quartz released *Up Your Sleeve* by Alterations – Beresford and Toop joined by Peter Cusack and Terry Day – which matched skewed rumble with a sense of agitation that generates heat like ill-fitting machine parts rubbing together.

More propulsive than their self-titled debut, these pieces focus the hubbub into more densely packed conglomerations which occasionally hint at a groove. However when coalescence threatens, the players pull back, opting instead for disjointed urgency. On "He Feels Like A Doris Day" parts begin to assemble around sporadic snatches of Beresford's almost reggae-ish bass, like iron filings creeping towards a magnet and coalescing into a spiky ferric fuzz.

As the record progresses, this clamour edges towards clangour, though the precision remains. "Trail Of Traps" drags asthmatic whistle and squeak across a floor strewn with percussive detritus, snagging occasionally on sharp edges or protruding corners, while "The Life And Opinion Of Masseur Ichi" is almost theatrical in its exuberance, its toothy guitar lines emerging across a background somewhere between queasy piano vamp and broken orchestral tune-up.

Rather than opting for complete abstraction Alterations demonstrate their wit through half-motifs and snippets of vocal gibberish. On the album's magnificent closer "Party Political", broken Vaudevillian keys rumble over lost flutes and off-time percussion before Beresford pipes up, imploring the audience to reject the ideology of greengrocers. They laugh, the weird tension of the previous tumult perfectly punctured by his interjections.

Spenser Tomson

Deicide

Crucifixion: The Early Years

Dissonance 3×CD/DL

Venom

In Nomine Satanas

BMG 6×CD+DVD

It is claimed that metal arose from worker struggle, with Black Sabbath borne from industrial accidents and imprisonment following crimes of necessity. A desire for meaning beyond the preordained led to ambiguous flirtations with blasphemy, but if Sabbath exhorted *"God, help me"* on their self-titled debut, Newcastle trio Venom would signify their intent from the outset with songs like "Sons Of Satan".

Included on this CD box set (following a vinyl-only release) are works recorded by the original line-up alongside a collection of early demos, amusingly recorded in a church hall. The influence of early metal and glam rock are evident on 1981 debut *Welcome To Hell* – but if their predecessors were at least afforded some manner of mundane stability, Venom were products of labour deregulation and dismantling of state apparatus that posed impediments to livelihood, leading to a cultural crisis of meaning that manifested itself in the nihilism of punk. The influence of the latter on Venom is evident.

1982's *Black Metal* named a genre and epitomised the band's rebellious stance. Their flippant irreverence targeted conservatism purporting to act in the name of morality despite tarnishing the livelihoods of workers. 1984's *At War With Satan* invoked John Milton, in which romantic iconoclasm draws comparison to revolt against market forces. Poor sales of 1985's *Possessed* lead to the dissolution of the original line-up but the record would garner a second wind due to accusations of engendering social decay alongside the likes of Danish musician King Diamond – who noted that such scapegoating reflected only the psychological projection of would be witchfinders.

A desire to shift blame away from economic policy would solidify into an adversary: the devil himself. Mass hysteria would reduce representations of promethean self-overcoming to antagonistic nihilism, the artistic confrontation with which would define the early work of Florida death metal outfit Deicide, as collated on *Crucifixion: The Early Years*. While Venom's influence is evident in the demos that make up *Amon: Feasting The Beast*, their 1990 self-titled debut cultivated an aesthetic of monstrosity through pitch-shifted vocals and downtuned guitars that would come to signify Deicide as a potent force within death metal.

A culture of theocratic moralism would incite frontman Glen Benton to adopt a villainous persona, and the increased technical proficiency of the 1992 release *Legion* would prove influential while indicating the discipline necessary for their deliberate engagement with evil. In their creative transfiguration of unconscious unpleasantries, Deicide enact the engagement with self-knowledge that signifies metal at its best.

Helena Celle

The Ex

Disturbing Domestic Peace

Ex Records DL/LP+7"

History Is What's Happening

Ex Records DL/LP

Tumult

Ex Records DL/LP

Dignity Of Labour: Sucked Out Chucked Out 1–8

Ex Records DL/LP

Blueprints For A Blackout

Ex Records DL/2×LP

Pokkeherrie

Ex Records DL/LP

"There ain't no food shops in England's dream", sang GW Sok back in 1984, *"and I don't care"*. Spiking The Sex Pistols with social realism, his line now feels like a caption to our doomed winter of blackouts and shortages. This pile of discs marks the start of a timely and massive archival project, repressing Netherlands punk group The Ex's catalogue, including facsimiles of the mass of posters, booklets, create your own label templates and bonus 7"s that were stuffed into the original LPs.

It takes a moment to reconcile this hint of fetishism with the group's commitment to radical politics. For all the anarchism of the early records (spitting hooks like *"The nuclear lobby's lying/Maybe that's why bricks are flying"*) there's a disarmingly dorky collector's impulse here. For the first few sets, at least, the paraphernalia is helpful – *Disturbing Domestic Peace* and *History Is What's Happening* can sound like basic punk workouts, but they also feature terrific bits of graphic design, bringing together chilling newsreel images, fucked-up, photocopied pamphlets and DIY touches.

The songs soon catch up with the sleeves. On *Tumult*, Sok's ravings are already more gripping (even if he can sound suspiciously like Mark E Smith) and you can hear Terrie Hessels's guitar work starting to mutate into something strange and wonderful. The stereo separation on a cut like "Bouquet Of Barbed Wire" has Hessels floating in the right channel, drifting so far from the rhythm track that you wonder if he's wandered into a different studio altogether. Released the same year, *Dignity Of Labour* is a riveting account of the Van Gelder paper factory closure, recorded while the band were squatting at that site in solidarity with 550 laid-off workers. The brief set roars with industrial noise, hunting for beats among pile drivers and printing presses.

The sonic palette is even broader on the lukewarm double album *Blueprints For A Blackout*. Working with The Mekons' Jon Langford, The Ex drown their core toolkit of guitar and drums in a rusty orchestra of accordions, tape loops, marching bands and oil barrels. It's a taste of a gloriously eclectic future (as well as a forgotten parallel to Tom Waits's Island sets from the same era) but one that strangely lacks momentum, missing the coiled energy of their later sessions with comrades like Tom Cora and Getatchew Mekuria.

The group's sixth LP marks the triumphant end of the origin story: this is The Ex. Stripping things back to the punk set-up of their earliest shows, Sok and Terrie are joined by just Luc Klassen on bass and Katherina Bornefeld on drums. It's a formidable rhythm section, and one that would stay put for over 20 years.

Pokkeherrie's swirling, revolutionary songs are more textural and carefully crafted than ever before – sneaking in choruses as well as slogans – but the band tear into them with the raw power of a live act. It's still a thrill hearing them try to burn this shithouse down.

Rob Turner

The Fall

The Light User Syndrome

Iconclassic 2×CD/DL

Originally released in 1996, The Fall's 18th studio album came at a particularly cursed time in the group's history. Longtime guitarist Craig Scanlon had just been fired, guitarist/vocalist Brix Smith and bassist Steve Hanley were both on the verge of quitting, and Mark E Smith was dealing with both money issues and severe alcoholism. Live shows at this time were erratic at best and disastrous at worst, reflecting the bad turn the band's inherent chaos had taken.

One of the remaining Fall albums to get the deluxe double disc treatment, *The Light User Syndrome* is as messy as one would expect, but there's still some of the alchemy that lights up even their lesser releases. Although the rapid line-up changes of the time caused problems, they also led to some interesting combinations, most notably Julia Nagle's squelchy keyboard sounds rubbing up against Brix's power pop guitar. Her vocals are both a grounding and disorientating presence, especially on "Hostile", a creepy series of harmonic twists and dead ends. Mark's presence is less reliable – although he sounds fiery on some songs, his mumbles on "Stay Away (Old White Train)" come with the claim that his guide vocals were used for the final record without his knowledge.

The bonus disc offers alternative takes, (not very good) live tracks and several versions of "The Chiselers", one of The Fall's best standalone singles of the 1990s, which appears on the album proper as the warped, extended "Interlude/Chilinism". Perhaps the album is most interesting as a hint of what was to come:

Sidney Sager & The Ambrosian Singers
Children Of The Stones (Original TV Soundtrack)
Trunk LP

Things hidden beneath the surface of the constructed edifice of Britain – the ancient, arcane, supernatural and sinister – collide and rise to the fore in *Children Of The Stones*, a seven part children's TV series produced by HTV West and first broadcast in the UK at 4:45pm on Monday 10 January 1977. Shooting took place on location in Avebury, Wiltshire and on studio sets in the West Country in the summer of 1976.

The series is not so much sci-fi as sci-*why*. Astrophysicist Adam Brake (Gareth Thomas) has acquired a research grant to investigate the magnetic properties of the megalithic stones that encircle the village of Milbury. He travels with his son Matthew (Peter Demin) to take up temporary residency in the village. When father and son arrive in Milbury they unwittingly enter another space-time continuum that superficially resembles the present but is in fact an ancient pagan England trapped in a loop. A circle within a stone circle.

Written by Jeremy Burnham and Trevor Ray, *Children Of The Stones* deals with time, space, landscape, belief, ritual and latent ancient and cosmic forces that reside relatively hidden, but are nonetheless always present in the British landscape, both cultural and actual. It questions the conflict between a pagan past and post-Reformation religious practice, and the osmosis between the two. It addresses belonging, secularity, secrecy, death, and even skirts around sex. It also asks questions of scientific orthodoxy, power systems and conformity and control. It is, to quote from one of the early lines in episode one, "pretty phantasmagorical".

One of the mechanisms driving the series is loss. The two outsiders are recently bereaved. The weirdness of grief is addressed briefly in one fairly throwaway line in episode one. Adam reveals to Iain Cuthbertson's Rafael Hendrick – an astronomer and the most powerful member of Milbury's society – that his wife died two years previously. Hendrick asks him how Matthew has been coping with the loss and Adam replies, "Very well at first, but… I felt it was unwise to let him handle any of my wife's possessions… her books, things like that. He began remembering incidents with her in incredible detail."

Aside from the Freudian dimension and establishing that Matthew may possess psychic abilities, this statement addresses a central aspect of *Children Of The Stones* – the materiality of death and bereavement. Reconnecting with the past via tactile engagement with the material remnants of the dead. Another memorable line in episode one is "I deny the existence of that which exists" which sounds like a direct expression of agnosticism. Perhaps the fundamental thing questioned by that agnosticism is Britain itself. On the whole, the psychic landscape of Britain in the 1970s seems rather dark and volatile, riddled with intrigue. *Children Of The Stones* is part of that landscape and it possesses darkness and intrigue by the bucket load.

What makes the series so resonant is its perfect synthesis of story, location and music. And the music is very striking. The opening title piece is enigmatic and elliptical but impossible to ignore. It is not typical TV music, nor is it a theme, though the motif is melodic and memorable. It is more of an atmosphere, but it is not passive. It is dynamic, vibrant and visceral. I imagine it must have terrified the hell out of kids on cold Monday evenings in January as the dusk settled into night.

Composed by Sidney Sager and sung by The Ambrosian Singers, the food of the gods they bring to the table is polyphonic, dissonant and largely a cappella. Apparently by chance, the producer of the series Peter Graham Scott heard a choral piece by Penderecki on his car radio while he made his way to start shooting the series in Avebury. You can hear that influence, maybe even a little of Ligeti, though what I hear in it bears more of a likeness to Stockhausen's *Stimmung*. But there is more to the score than the theme tune and this album gathers all the cues in the series and even all eight seconds of the cheery aquatic wobble that is Johnny Johnson's classic HTV ident.

Of course, permutations of the theme reoccur, sometimes becoming wilder with polyphonic screams, moans and utterances, at other times calm choral swoons. Many cues also include Foley work: the sound of breaking glass and solid objects dropping onto hard surfaces, human movement through long grass or shrubs, the howls and whispers of wind, the hoot of an owl, furtive feet walking on gravel.

There are also other instrumental voices: vibraphone, timpani, bass guitar, violin. But the main distinctive feature running throughout these cues is reverberation. Reverb is used to enhance and mutate harmonics and to provide a hermetic, continuous, unified space that contains the sometimes discontinuous and abrupt musical articulations. It can also be seen as an extension of the central aspects of the story, which involve the hermeticism of Milbury and also the petrification, or lapidification, of humans within the stones.

Children Of The Stones was only ever repeated once, so its scarcity on TV screens has imbued it with mythic status, compounded by its apparent unavailability on home media. But the other reason the series has such resonance is that it is so rich in ideas, and those ideas are still germane to us today. ☐

The score for 1970s TV series ***Children Of The Stones*** is a crucial component of its timeless meditation on landscape, grief and cultural turbulence. By **Richard Thomas**

Peter Demin in *Children Of The Stones* (1977)

the electronic beats of the hilarious "Cheetham Hill" predate 1999's excellent *The Marshall Suite* while the driving drums and keyboards of "Powder Keg" predict *Fall Heads Roll* and their re-energised mid-2000s sound. A mixed bag of a turning point, then – but necessary for the innovations to come.
Claire Biddles

The Jimi Hendrix Experience
Los Angeles Forum: April 26, 1969
Experience Hendrix/Legacy CD/DL/2×LP
When The Jimi Hendrix Experience made their sold out Los Angeles Forum appearance in April 1969, relations within the band were reportedly under heavy strain. Yet there's no hint of any such negative energy in this recording.

Setting the agenda is opener "Tax Free" which, Hendrix explains, was written by "a couple of Swedish cats, Hansson and Karlsson". With its snarling blues licks, controlled feedback and whammy bar action, it previews some of the sonic spectacle ahead. A fiery "Foxy Lady" follows, culminating in a thrillingly flamboyant conclusion.

Introduced as "America's soul", the smouldering slow blues of "Red House" arcs from spacious to frenetic, then muted to resolute, while deep riffs fizz effortlessly from Hendrix's fingers. "Spanish Castle Magic" is dedicated to "the plain-clothes police out there and other goofballs" (a nod to the law enforcement response to an increasingly rowdy crowd), includes a lengthy period where bassist Noel Redding and drummer Mitch Mitchell stop playing altogether and the guitar is at liberty to explore the sonic terrain unconstrained. It eventually weaves a route, somewhere between the improvised and the rehearsed, back into the fold of the original song's driving motif where the waiting band rejoins.

That many of these songs are extended jams should not be mistaken for excess for its own sake. Hendrix's desire to push the boundaries was more probing than indulgent. By now he had the freedom to move away from playing three minute hits in favour of expanding the musical experience for both the audience and the musicians, and this is at play here.

"Star Spangled Banner", while shorter and not as visceral as the version played during his famous Woodstock performance four months later, still delivers similar scorching feedback roars, screams and explosions and, as at Max Yasgur's farm, the final elongated note segues into a spirited "Purple Haze". By the song's end sections of the crowd are rushing towards the stage en masse, with police sent to prevent an invasion, and this provides the backdrop to a pummelling "I Don't Live Today".

While a heaving 15 minute "Voodoo Child (Slight Return)" may not be the obvious way to placate an overzealous crowd, it is a sonic journey that is this night's piece de resistance. After melding into Mitchell's second drum solo of the night, then materialising as Cream's "Sunshine Of Your Love", the original song's menacing riff returns for a climactic reprise, and a feedback tone is left to buzz as the stage is vacated.

Two months after this show Redding suddenly left the band, a move that facilitated Hendrix's wish to work with new players and led to his expanded Woodstock line-up. This show, presented in its entirety, is a fitting testament to the giddy heights achieved by the original Experience before its demise propelled Jimi on to his next phase.
Shane Woolman

Joyce with Mauricio Maestro
Natureza
Far Out CD/DL/LP
This might sound like a grim way to samba, but stick with it. In *Of Woman Born* the lesbian poet Adrienne Rich wrote that the cathexis of emotion between mother and daughter – "essential, distorted, misused" – is "the greatest unwritten story". Compared to all the father and son psychodramas out there, that might be true, but while unwritten, certainly not unsung.

Joyce's "Feminina", heard in its full 11 minute version here, is one of the great 20th century feminist statements, a conversation between mother and daughter that examines motherhood, in Rich's terms, as both experience and institution. It became the title tune of a 1980 album that also included "Clareana", likewise addressed to her daughters. This was a time when only male experience was fully validated in Brazilian song; the female singer's role was to play receiving moon to the lover's blazing sun. Even the great Elis Regina, who was quietly self-destructing on coke and vermouth at the time of Joyce's success, fell under that stereotype to a significant degree.

Natureza was made in 1977 at Columbia's New York studios. The orchestrations were by Claus Ogerman (who made a sequence of lush strings albums with Bill Evans) and the band included first call American players like Michael Brecker, Joe Farrell, Mike Mainieri and Buster Williams. And there the story pretty much ended. There was pressure on Joyce to rerecord the vocals in English. Ogerman was both busy and elusive. Joyce fell pregnant again. Meanwhile, the North American craze for Brazilian music, which had begun with *Jazz Samba* in 1962 was beginning to seem old hat; a 1976 live recording of Stan Getz and João Gilberto at Keystone Korner didn't even surface until 2016.

So *Natureza* went away and appears now as an important historical document. Ogerman's role, and the band's, was not much more than frosting. It's no coincidence that Joyce, referencing pre-surrealist, pre-Picasso association of the guitar with the female, adopted a logo that incorporated the instrument's shape into her name. Voice and guitar work together in these songs with a closeness that can't be likened to anyone except perhaps Joni Mitchell. The songs written collaboratively with Mauricio Maestro, particularly "Descompassadamente", are the best on the set, though the closing "Pega Leve", with its raw little flute line runs it close. Nothing, however, stands alongside the magnificence of "Feminina". If its confinement was long, its delivery is doubly welcome.
Brian Morton

Meredith Monk
The Recordings
ECM 13×CD/DL
Meredith Monk is probably the most important artist ever sponsored by ECM. Apart from a couple of early releases on Lovely Music and Wergo, and some later things on Tzadik and Cantaloupe, almost all her recorded work has been on Manfred Eicher's label. But while *Dolmen Music*, *Turtle Dreams* and *Book Of Days* have long been enshrined as bona fide outsider masterpieces in American music, many will be shaken by the sheer bulk of Monk's output for ECM, which includes an entire opera (*Atlas*) and 2011's staggering *Songs Of Ascension*, which now has to be seen as a culminating triumph and the conjunction of her various musical, spatial and spiritual concerns.

As composer, vocalist, dancer and film maker, Monk has real claim to be considered the complete artist, but she would giggle – and even at 80 she still giggles – if you were to throw a term like gesamtkunstwerk at her. Monk is more like Judy Chicago than Richard Wagner. Her work is one stitch at a time, make do and mend, a simple, practical matter of who goes where in the little creative communities that are her working ensemble; it's about practical fixes as well as compassion, something that comes across very strongly in the unflinching portraiture and unfussy security camera pans of her poignant film *Ellis Island*.

The subtext to everything and the thematic undercurrent to the whole archive project is *The Education Of The Girlchild* – from 1972–73 but known mostly in fragments. Though cast for smaller vocal forces than *Needle-Brain Lloyd And The Systems Kid* which called for 150 voices, it rested on a similarly simple instrumental base.

At a certain level, Monk's music sits alongside a line of American novelists – Edith Wharton at her least metropolitan, Willa Cather, Eudora Welty, Carson McCullers, Flannery O'Connor, ultimately Joan Didion – for whom the immigrant/frontier experience isn't about big, thumping debates over identity but the simple arrangements that make life, community, communication possible in the first place. *Dolmen Music* imagined a society that had not yet devised a tongue; on the record their first mutterings were paired with extracts from *Education* – a de facto manifesto from an artist who has always considered manifestos a bit pompous and silly.

Turtle Dreams came out ten years after Thomas Nagel's important philosophical paper "What Is It Like To Be A Bat?" but Monk didn't start in the library, or with some arcane pataphysical speculation (Gavin Bryars's *The Sinking Of The Titanic* was around too) – she started in the vivarium with her reptilian pet Neutron. The most extraordinary and compelling journey in the whole of American art is laid out here, with Meredith Monk's own shining reminiscence and gruff commentary from producer Eicher in the accompanying text.
Brian Morton

Alva Noto & Ryuichi Sakamoto
Vrioon (reMASTER)
Noton CD/DL/2×LP
Insen (reMASTER)
Noton CD/DL/2×LP
Revep (reMASTER)
Noton CD/DL/LP
Utp_ (reMASTER)
Noton CD/DL/2×LP
Summvs (reMASTER)
Noton CD/DL/2×LP
Originally released between 2002–11, *VIRUS* is an exquisite five album series by Ryuichi Sakamoto and Carsten Nicolai aka Alva Noto. The albums laid the foundations for a collaboration that continues richly to this day across multiple iterations – from performances at Philip Johnson's Glass House, to the soundtrack for Alejandro González Iñárritu's *The Revenant*. The pair's musical kinship reveals itself gradually across the series, a shared interest in the emotional and gestural meeting of electronic and acoustic instrumentation.

Vrioon sets a high benchmark: a sequence of Sakamoto's typically evocative piano phrases filtered through Nicolai's electronic processes. *Insen* continues in this vein, but the mood is more blatantly plaintive, and the sound is more weathered. On *Vrioon*, pops and clicks orbit each track; on *Insen*'s "Logic Moon", the same noises are drawn in from the periphery, eroding the snatches of melody with their sharp edges. By "Avaol" the piano is covered almost completely by a buzzing layer of electronic noise – like a dense coating of insects over a long untouched surface. A balanced sense of destruction and creation runs throughout.

Third release *Revep* has an energetic, searching character, with tracks formed of restless deconstructed piano melody. It also has a more rigid remit than the first two releases, based around "ax Mr L", an abstracted rework of Sakamoto's theme for *Merry Christmas, Mr Lawrence*. Originally an EP, the reissue adds three more tracks. "City Radieuse" folds the chopped-up piano sounds back into the original theme's more sentimental mood: a meeting of modes and eras, rather than a transformation.

Celtic Frost in Birchwil, Switzerland, July 1984

Celtic Frost
Danse Macabre
Noise/BMG 3×LP+MC+3×12"+7"+Hbk/5×CD
You can tell a lot about a band from their choice of covers. Swiss avant metal pioneers Celtic Frost never attempted songs by other metal or hard rock acts, casting farther afield into areas such as art rock, MOR and post-punk. Their interpretation of "In The Chapel In Moonlight" for example – written by Billy Hill in 1936, first performed by Shep Fields and taken to the top of the US easy listening chart by Dean Martin in 1967 – was a larkish reference to Slayer's 1984 EP *Haunting The Chapel* that nevertheless sounded entirely congruent with the Swiss group's original material.

Their version of "Mexican Radio" by Los Angeles country punks Wall Of Voodoo was another curveball. The fact that this essentially faithful (albeit iron reclad) rendition was placed at the head of their 1987 album *Into The Pandemonium* indicated not timidity or distrust in their own material but a blithe disregard for metallic convention. Looking beyond the scope of this new box set, on 1990's *Vanity/Nemesis* the band paid tribute to Bryan Ferry with "This Island Earth" and David Bowie with "Heroes".

This sort of lateral thinking was rare in the world of 1980s metal. But Celtic Frost rarely took the prescribed route. "For me, The Sisters Of Mercy is the same as Deep Purple," founder member, vocalist and guitarist Thomas Gabriel Fischer (aka Tom G Warrior) told Red Bull Music Academy in 2016. Fischer's openness to non-metal could be heard as early as their 1984 debut *Morbid Tales*, which was as punkish – the influence of UK crust punks Discharge is audible in the D-beat battering and strangulated vocals – as it was metallic. "Danse Macabre" meanwhile was a bleakly psychedelic foray into organised noise that resembled a demonic remix of The Beatles' "Revolution No 9", and "Nocturnal Fear" incorporated a brief but thrilling moment in which galloping punk metal gave way to a burst of freeform jazz. Aside from its instances of overt experimentation, *Morbid Tales* sounded like nothing else – a churning, grindingly heavy cauldron of pitch black riffage, tortured vocals and mythic/romantic lyricism whose grandeur would only escalate on subsequent records.

1985's *To Mega Therion* was a striking evolution from the debut and saw the band indulge their avant inclinations – and everything else – with increased confidence. The album opened with the booming drums and austere French horn of "Innocence And Wrath" and accommodated two and a half minutes of macabre ambience titled "Tears In A Prophet's Dream". The songs were tighter, the sound less ragged. Whereas *Morbid Tales* had one leather boot in the garage, the follow-up sounded as though it had been beamed in from another weird realm altogether.

1987's *Into The Pandemonium* remains their magnum opus, a (still) divisive masterpiece which tested the boundaries of genre. Aside from the aforementioned Wall Of Voodoo cover, "I Won't Dance (The Elder's Orient)" and "Mesmerized" sounded like the kind of thing David Sylvian might produce if he ever turned his hand to metal, "One In Their Pride" was a sampledelic interlude driven by drum machine and "Rex Irae (Requiem)" introduced operatic vocals and symphonic arrangements. If all this sounds unsurprising in an era of rampant eclecticism, it's worth bearing in mind that *nobody* was doing this kind of thing in 1987. The recording sessions were reportedly plagued by label anxiety over the band's shift into unknown territories.

Containing a wealth of supplementary material, *Danse Macabre* is limited to what is commonly regarded as Celtic Frost's classic period (1984–87) and therefore does not paint a complete picture. Following *Into The Pandemonium*, Fischer dissolved the band and assembled a new line-up. This configuration produced 1988's *Cold Lake* whose unexpected glam metal overtones – not to mention the hairspray overdose of the accompanying press photos – were met with widespread ridicule. Fischer eventually disowned the record – he recently conceded that it would doubtless be reissued in some form following his death – and its (excellent) successor *Vanity/Nemesis* did little to revive the band's fortunes. Fischer went on to experiment with electronics in Apollyon Sun and Celtic Frost would not release another record until 2006's triumphant *Monotheist*.
Joseph Stannard

Utp expands the project further than its two instigators. Performed on piano and electronics with chamber orchestration by Ensemble Modern, it was commissioned to mark the 400th anniversary of the German city of Mannheim, and matches this expansive concept with its sonic palette. Hearing the grandiose organ of "Plateaux 1" juxtaposed with the modest, very human noise of "Silence" feels emblematic of the entire project's poignancy.

It's also significant that the project ends with a return of sorts, or a closing of a circle. After the expansion of *Utp*, *Summvs* goes back to the roots of the series, echoing the manipulated, weathered piano of *Vrioon* and *Insen* – with some more robust structures, such as "Pionier I00", mixed in.

Over ten years since its completion, the patience and loaded potentiality of the series is striking; its gradual changes and returns are a kind of time travel. Listening to the way sounds are stretched, and considering the gradual pace of the project itself, I am reminded of Sakamoto's quest to find "a perpetual sound" on 2017's *Async*. It's moving to trace the history of this still unfolding musical philosophy.
Claire Biddles

Martin Kyburz

Les Rallizes Dénudés
67–69 Studio Et Live
Temporal Drift CD/DL/LP
Mizutani/Les Rallizes Dénudés
Temporal Drift CD/DL/LP
77 Live
Temporal Drift 2XCD/DL/3XLP
During the mysterious Japanese psychedelic underground group Les Rallizes Dénudés' three decades of existence, only three albums were approved by founding member and lead guitarist Takashi Mizutani. The limited editions released in 1991 were soon snapped up, thus paving the way for countless live bootleg recordings to flood the market by way of documenting Mizutani's covert musical legacy.

Following the guitarist's death in 2019, a company was established in Japan by former Rallizes members and associates called The Last One Musique, which (together with US independent Temporal Drift) has now resurrected the three albums that make up the group's officially recognised back catalogue. Selected from taped live gigs and studio sessions, with personnel varying from album to album, Mizutani's treatment of the music he and his fellow musicians made is as unpredictable as the man himself.

Formed in 1967 at Kyoto's Doshisha

University, Rallizes specialised in heavily amplified, hypnotic acid rock workouts and fractured folk, further embellished with poetical outbursts. Feeding his head with a rich diet of late 60s West Coast and Detroit rock, ESP-Disk' free jazz and early Velvet Underground, Mizutani worked with his group to play skin-shredding sonic ceremonies in echoing spaces to audiences that either fled from their amplified attack, or sat listening in a beatific state of meditational trance.

The roots of Rallizes can be heard forming beneath the surface on the *67–69* collection of studio and live recordings, where mad shadowed garage grind and surf rock experiments crash alongside Mizutani's tenderly performed singer/songwriter aspirations. This naked side of his playing style comes to the fore on *Mizutani/Les Rallizes Dénudés* with a set of delicately arranged guitar and voice compositions that belies any preconceived notion that Rallizes only made noise music.

Recorded in 1970 at Doshisha University by bass player Makoto Kubota (who can also be heard playing on the session), the mood here is reflective, mystical and intimate before finally letting loose with an early version of "The Last One" – one of the extended jam numbers in a Rallizes set that Mizutani would keep refining throughout the group's erratic lifespan. Sounding like a fuzzed-out mating of The Grateful Dead's "Morning Dew" and The Velvet Underground's "Sister Ray", the song rears up and flattens everything in its wake.

The band detonates with full force on *77 Live* where, over steadily paced drum and bass patterns, Mizutani's roaring Gibson SG guitar conjurations suck the oxygen out of the hall to create a sonic entity that transcends rock music as it is traditionally recognised.

Edwin Pouncey

Topdown Dialectic
S/T 2013
Peak Oil DL/LP

There's an enduring romantic streak among the arts concerning the displacement of agency. That is, makers who ascribe their work to a power or property outside themselves: God, ancestral spirits, blessed instruments, trance states, even an old fashioned deal with the Devil. From Robert Johnson to Don Cherry to Hildegard of Bingen, there's a gradient of myth and folklore elevating the notion of musician as conduit more than creator. This canon can add the recordings of undisclosed North American entity Topdown Dialectic to its unique ranks.

Although little definitive information exists, statements shared by label Peak Oil clarify Topdown Dialectic as "a process not a person". The music originates via a complex chain of generative software, finessed until the algorithmic labyrinth refracts sufficiently to warrant documentation. The ramifications are intriguingly anti-auteur, closer to screen captures than compositions. And yet what's far more astounding is how dynamic and deliberate the tracks feel. Granular, smeared and shapeshifting, like the best Basic Channel stems mulched, randomised and resynced.

It's inaccurate to speak of albums (or songs) with Topdown Dialectic, but this newly reissued 2013 collection marks the project's first public offering, originally released via fleeting American cassette label Tailings. Incredibly, there is no gestation period – its sound leaps from the speakers fully formed. Feathery fiber optic haze flecked with subliminal synths, buried bass, stereo-panned snippets of voice and gauzy, regurgitated rhythms, each piece flutters more than flows, churning at the threshold of some mesmerising stasis. Too dissociative for dub techno but more musical than miasmic glitch, its wavelength is one of interzones and ghosts in the machine. Disembodied, primordial, post-human.

TD's subsequent releases are rich and bewitching listens, but follow no discernible narrative of artistic evolution. The project's entire ethos is its unyielding parameters: nameless, authorless, greyscale abstractions, instigated not crafted. That such limitations bear fruit as vast and fractal as these works speaks hugely to the vision of the systems operator editing and exporting the files. Shorn of biographical noise, they take on an air of the sublime.

Britt Brown

Markos Vamvakaris
Death Is Bitter
Olvido/Mississippi DL/LP

From the time I first heard about and actually heard rembetiko music – an urban Greek style that flourished in the early 20th century – it was always referred to as the soundtrack of hash dens and brothels. Few figures tower over the tradition like Markos Vamvakaris, a gruff voiced bouzouki player with a groan like Howlin' Wolf. Born on the island of Syros to an impoverished working class Catholic family in 1905, by all accounts he was a rascal.

In 1917 Vamvakaris fled the island after accidentally sending a massive boulder down a hill and through the roof of a home – which turned out to be unoccupied at the time – and landed in the Athens port city of Piraeus. He worked in a slaughterhouse, but he spent his spare time hanging out with seasoned bouzouki players and over time he began performing his own songs in a classic style, with open strings. This album's detailed sleevenotes mention a likely apocryphal story that in 1924 he vowed to learn the instrument within six months or he would chop off one of his hands with a meat cleaver, but it's more likely that he started playing the instrument right after arriving in Piraeus.

This superb new collection of songs recorded between 1932–36 makes plain that the genre's seedy reputation was no fluke. In English translations of the lyrics, Vamvakaris sings about smoking hashish, hiding drugs during police raids, excoriating a lover who disgraced him ("Bitch, You Made Me Waste Away") and pledging to beat another on account of her jealousy and greed. Of the 123 songs he cut between 1932–41, 19 contained explicitly references to hashish. Indeed, there was nothing particularly progressive or generous about the spirit of this hard-scrabble music, which reflected harsh daily realities akin to the blues. Most of these dozen songs feature his voice accompanied only by his own nimble bouzouki picking and driving acoustic guitar that lay out stomping dance rhythms.

Vamvakaris presides over these grooves with soulful yet stern authority, flexing tough guy braggadocio, especially on his theme song "Markos From Syros" where he howls, *"Where I enter they all watch me/ Where I sit down they all treat me/In the teke or the taverna/They're all knocked out to see me"*.

Peter Margasak

Dennis Wize
Consciousness Program
Stroll CD/DL

New Chicago archive imprint Stroll arrives with a CD reissue of a 1980 album by Dennis Wize aka Dennis Weise, a spectral and wayward protagonist who went on to contribute to releases by Bill Laswell and Daevid Allen in the subsequent decade.

The opening sample/shortwave/canned laughter collage of "Thought Precedes Action" only lasts 58 seconds but you're already reminded of This Heat's most diseased moments and Eno/Byrne's contemporary sampledelia, before "Love In Foam And Verse" beams in like some dream collision of Arthur Russell and Tim Buckley circa *Starsailor*, rivulets of textured guitar rippling under arcs of multitracked vocal and pellucid harp. "Anima Manna/Consciousness Program" builds from a robot march into a dreamy lattice of processed guitar, the second half absconding from its beginnings entirely to become a weft of dubby mariachi gospel.

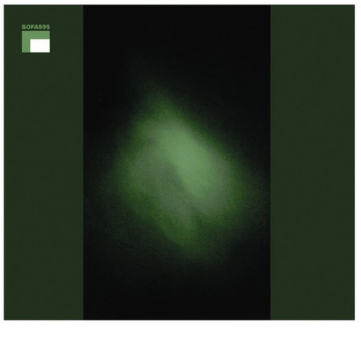
"Rosita Facilita" is a freaky phased/flanged moonlit stroll around mento and flamenco before "Light As Air" almost vanishes between delicate harp and fuzzy static. "Balfazzar" thrums with African instrumentation but with a gamelan-like rotational rhythm, strange 'speaking' fiddle and strings laced into the flow, before closer "Celestial Congo Dub" takes all we've heard so far and plunges it into a Prince Jammy-like space of distended structures and mind-melting drone. A vital, startling reissue.

Neil Kulkarni

SOFA592
Mattie Barbier
threads
(CD/DL)

SOFA594
Ingar Zach
Musica Liquida
(LP/CD/DL)

SOFA595
Jan Martin Smørdal/ Øystein Wyller Odden
Kraftbalanse
(LP/CD/DL)



New releases on SOFA Music www.sofamusic.no www.sofamusic.bandcamp.com

The Inner Sleeve

This month's artwork selected by **Gaye Su Akyol**

Morphine
Good
Rykodisc 1993
Artwork/design by Eric Pfeiffer
Photography by Anna Cole

The year was 2003, my first days of university. Chilly autumn winds grabbed Istanbul by the two sides of its collar, fallen leaves and hopelessness all around. The best thing in my life at the time was Oz Cafe, with its owner Tahsin Abi. Me and my friends, we were a three member girl band. Thinking of hanging out in that cafe filled me with a sense of peaceful calm, even in those weird, dark days. We'd all run there after school or work, chat for hours with Tahsin Abi, pour our hearts out, listen to music he'd put on or play fresh finds for each other: Jeff Buckley, Tom Waits, Nick Cave.

CDs were in their golden age at the time. Tahsin Abi had an incredible jazz collection, and in this hidden corner of Kadıköy, with its beautiful lighting, good coffee and grilled cheese sandwiches, he was about to give me a gift I will take with me to the grave.

We were smoking rolled-up cigarettes and drinking god knows how many cups of coffee and suddenly "The Saddest Song" started playing. I remember the darkness inside of me expanding and consuming me, and immensely enjoying it. "One more time!" I shouted. That song played over again and again, just under three minutes, and the pain healed every cell of my being. I had a new confidante, but they were yet oblivious to our newly found relationship. This was Morphine's debut album *Good*, with drum patterns like nails in my skull, Dana Colley's unmatched saxophone and Mark Sandman's voice, and I was hooked immediately. The 49 second long "Lisa" was constituted solely of free-flowing sentences of the sax. "You Speak My Language" was the distilled spirit of a voice that spoke of the same darkness as me.

That darkness contrasted hard against the serene floral habitat on the cover: the butterfly I could bet was screaming at the top of its lungs. Inside the CD case, the photograph was a bit more complex. With thick cigarette smoke in the background, three sketchy men, each seated in front of a small pile of cash, stared into the camera as if annoyed at having been disturbed at their candlelit gambling table. I felt it to be the visual reflection of the heavy basslines, the outworldly saxophone sounds, the living and breathing drums of the music inside.

11 years after it was released this album grabbed me in a Kadıköy cafe and built its house in my heart. From under every bout of hopelessness, from inside every true despair, came Morphine. Two-string slide bass, saxophone, drums and Sandman's baritone vocals, a sonic installation where less is more, simultaneously rebellious and benign, the strangest game-changer of all time. Years later, through cables and computers, I got to meet Dana Colley and record a song with him. We may be releasing it soon! □ Gaye Su Akyol's *Anadolu Ejderi* is released by Glitterbeat

Turn On, Tune In, Drift Off: Ambient Music's Psychedelic Past
Victor Szabo
Oxford University Press Pbk 392 pp

"[Certain] music, if you put it on, will keep [listeners] in present time. It wasn't always called new age music, it could be called trance, mood music, or atmospheric music. Sometimes jazz can do that for somebody," musician Laraaji tells author Victor Szabo, describing the new age genre in an interview for the latter's deep history of ambient music. "But music that has a continual drone, and that expresses a fluidity, and that allows for the listener to be present with their breathing, and to be in present time, and to drift away from mundane thoughts, and to feel an emotional sense of connection to the universe, or to the all-that-is – to me, that's getting into nowness."

And though this passage appears late in *Turn On, Tune In, Drift Off*, it might double as a mission statement for the book and the genres it's explicitly about: new age, ambient and EDM ambient, but also the genres that informed and, positively or pejoratively, inspired them into being – easy listening, psychedelic rock, classical music, jazz and New York minimalism. Szabo, the Elliott Assistant Professor of Music at Hampden-Sydney College in Virginia, sifts through the myths, narratives and counter-narratives surrounding soothing post-Muzak sonics like an obsessed paleontologist; a selected discography appendix namechecks the first Warp Records *Artificial Intelligence* compilation, Ana Roxanne, The Orb, James Ferraro, Wendy Carlos and Miles Davis.

Founded in 1973 and hosted by Stephen 'Timotheo' Hill and the late Anna 'Annamystic' Turner, the nomadic *Hearts Of Space* radio show was instrumental in popularising diffuse and consciousness-expanding music. Szabo pores over the programme's musically omnivorous playlists, which often ran for hours, heavy on world music and complete LP sides. An early slogan: "Slow music for fast times".

The divide between new age and ambient – two sides of the same coin – reveals itself quickly in this telling. New age – exemplified by Tony Scott's 1964 feathery *Music For Zen Meditation,* Paul Horn's 1968 modal flute opus *Inside* and Stephen Halpern's 1975 synth float *Spectrum Suite* – arrived first, emerging as an offshoot of "the material culture around psychedelic experience, alternative spirituality, and holistic health that was rooted in the California counterculture", Szabo writes. New age, employing nature sounds, mellow vibes and orientalist elements in the purposeful service of sonic anaesthesia, drifted from its granola origins into a sort of yuppie wallpaper. By the 1980s, the genre was widely successful commercially and often derided, by critical organs, as vacuous product.

Concepts introduced by composers Erik Satie and John Cage would inform ambient, a term coined by former Roxy Music member Brian Eno in the mid-70s as he recorded and produced a quartet of LPs (two solo, one with Harold Budd, and another with Laaraji) predicated on unorthodox processes, studio-enabled happenstance and Oblique Strategies. Critically respected if not universally embraced, ambient was pop somnolence as Fine Art, subconscious and beautiful and quietly adventurous, in opposition to what were perceived as minimalism's dull pretensions. Szabo dedicates a long, probing chapter to Eno's ambient productions and, in considering *Ambient 1: Music For Airports*, locates what set the genre apart from new age: ambivalence and doubt.

Ambient found a fresh new context as the 80s gave way to the 90s and 2000s, and EDM culture exploded. It is "shorthand for the music associated with chill-out rooms and areas, which become semiregular features of underground clubs and raves in the United Kingdom," Szabo writes. "Parties more devoted to chilling than dancing will also emerge, begetting a bohemian electronic music scene driven by young DJs' transgeneric musical curiosity." □

Laraaji

Rahim Fortune

From deep meditation to *Hearts Of Space*, **Victor Szabo** traces the mind altering **history of ambient music**. By **Raymond Cummings**

Coil's Peter Christopherson (left) and John Balance

Everything Keeps Dissolving: Conversations With Coil
Nick Soulsby (Editor)
Strange Attractor Press Pbk 240 pp

Coil's work was always suffused with their sexuality, whether in the form of the romance between core members John Balance and Peter Christopherson, working on Derek Jarman's *The Angelic Conversation* or dancing with Thai rent boys in the video for "Love's Secret Domain". But as editor Nick Soulsby argues in the introduction to *Everything Keeps Dissolving: Conversations With Coil*, this topic was often met with a "blank absence of a response", buried under their associations with psychedelics, occultism or the macho industrial music scene.

Soulsby's book succeeds in establishing the important role sexuality played in their worldview – "It's a huge advantage to be gay," Christopherson half-jokes. They found a template for resisting normativity in the magickal thinking of Aleister Crowley, Ralph Chubb and Austin Osman Spare, in turn leading them to split from Psychic TV's groupthink and go it alone in 1983. In the early 1990s, drugs and clubbing, they claim, helped them find a new "kind of intimacy" otherwise lacking in the midst of the AIDS epidemic. Even their concept of sidereal music – an intent to distort sounds and instruments – and their refusal to stick to one genre or name, seem like an embrace of queerly fluid identities, as much as a tactic inspired by artist/occultist Spare.

Conversations are culled from a wide range of sources – zines, trade magazines, a TV interview – but return to the same topics. One common concern is Coil's flirtation with transgressive imagery. Accusations of fascism are explicitly rejected in accounts of their split from Boyd Rice. But those hoping to clear up persistent rumours that the group went beyond just flirting with child sexual imagery will be disappointed. Remarks are limited to occasional jokes, their ambiguous sample of a kid at play on "Anal Staircase" and how media witch hunts were targeting paedophiles. The book establishes that in the moral panic over AIDS, gay men were seen as automatically guilty – Coil's adult friends were imprisoned for consensual BDSM. No evidence has emerged of Coil engaging in anything illegal, but in that phobic atmosphere, with a higher same-sex age of consent, it was unsurprising that gay artists and activists sought to disrupt ideas of innocence, harm or choice. Balance and Christopherson talk of the importance of establishing one's own limits by experiencing extremes. What remains unclear is how to reconcile this individualist philosophy with their belief that we are products of a control society, or that the self is multiple and unstable.

The idea of testing oneself through limit experiences informs the book's tragic arc. Towards the end, conversations fragment into quotations reporting that Balance's onstage self-exorcisms have exacerbated the alcoholism that would ultimately kill him at the age of 42. Christopherson maintains his darkly camp humour throughout, describing his by then ex as "attempting to turn into Oliver Reed".

The book's value lies in allowing readers to spend time with their wit and voices, and revelations about the networks of zines and friendships which supported Coil. Little new is revealed about their working methods, lost projects or influences (Kate Bush, Cluster, Stockhausen). Yet a picture is created of two men who were deeply sentimental (collaborator Stephen Thrower was fired for cynicism), but also arch critics, with a satirical streak aimed at Jarman's films, British social mores or their own reputations. Such ambivalent, adulterated enthusiasms and pleasures were perhaps the only ones possible in the hostile times in which Coil worked.

Paul Clinton

Junk Percussion: Notes For The Future
Roger Turner & Mari Kamada
Terra Nova Pbk 180 pp

Roger Turner is a heayweight of UK improvisation, and this book highlights his passion for creating his own instruments from junk, his generosity in sharing secrets of his extraordinary sounds, and exceptional knowledge of percussive sound as an alchemy of different metals and minerals. Together with Mari Kamada, Turner provides an intriguing insight into his life as a drummer through a series of photographs of objects collected and refashioned as percussion instruments. Along with glimpses of his world travels in search of new music and sounds, the book also reveals his deep thinking about improvised music and the people he has worked with, including Phil Minton, Lol Coxhill and Alvin Lucier.

There's an urgency in the rhythm of the writing – too much information, too little time – as it leads us through the geoscience of metals, as applied to improvised percussion. The book's image list of selected objects is framed by an informed personal essay on the use of junk in music and art. An engaging and entertaining style underpins serious thought on the contrast between the openness of experimental music and the "commodification of sound" within the Western music industry. Referring to "outsider acoustic percussion", the book contextualises its history in John Cage's found sound, Marcel Duchamp's readymades – found objects as art – and the significance of the 1950s Fluxus and Japanese Gutai art movements in creating art from everyday materials. Turner stresses the sound qualities of his junk artefacts above any decorative perception, although he acknowledges audiences' amusement at their use as musical instruments.

These pieces include a bowl-spring combo – a metal spring inserted into an Indian singing bowl; a z-spring sheet of spring-tensioned galvanised steel found in a skip, which sounds like a musical saw; an old colander; a fine-ribbed hard plastic dinner table mat, across which he swishes sticks for a DJ scratching sound; a lead sheet that sounds like a snare drum with no resonance; and metal chains which Turner loves to dump on a snare drum mid-concert to surprise the audience.

He also heats and hammers several cymbals to deaden and repitch their various metal sounds. Brass, an alloy of copper and zinc, has a hard edginess to it, whereas aluminium provides a "clean pointillist sound". Laying metal instruments on a heavy rubber pad increases resonance. There are rattles, bones, carefully prepared spoons, forks, an 'anti cheese-grater', a set square with inserted spring and a selection of twisted sharp metal sticks.

The book concludes with an essay highlighting the childhood influence of Turner's older brothers, who introduced him to improvised jazz and art of the 50s and 60s, the power of Baby Dodds, and the cymbal sound of Billy Higgins; Fats Waller, Duke Ellington, Ornette Coleman, Wally Stott's orchestra, Schoenberg, Varèse and, especially, the extraordinary sounds from the classic BBC radio comedy *The Goon Show*.

The book is too small, however. I imagine Turner and Kamada chose its handy size to make it easier for busy touring musicians to take it on the road, but here's hoping for a larger second edition making it easier for readers to leaf through its glossy pages of incredible photos of shiny metal and slowly contemplate the book's fascinating merging of science, art and percussion.

Jo Hutton

Mark Lally

For Zitkála-Šá
Raven Chacon
New Documents Pbk 126 pp
Raven Chacon's work often mines the legacies of colonial violence that haunt North America, performing a kind of cultural historiography that bears witness to the embeddedness of the past in the present. In 2022, he became the first Native artist to win the Pulitzer Prize for music for his piece *Voiceless Mass*, which uses a pipe organ and instrumental ensemble to mourn Indigenous victims of church violence.

With this book of graphic scores, the Diné composer turns his attention to 13 Native musicians making vital contributions to music – all of whom "happen to be women": Laura Ortman, Cheryl L'Hirondelle, Suzanne Kite, Barbara Croall, Jacqueline Wilson, Autumn Chacon, Heidi Senungetuk, Ange Loft, Joy Harjo, Carmina Escobar, Olivia Shortt, Candice Hopkins and Buffy Sainte-Marie. The collection is dedicated to Yankton Dakota composer, poet, critical writer and activist Zitkála-Šá (1876–1938), whose work advocated pan-Indian solidarity. During his research, Chacon realised the best way to honour her legacy would be to compose new works for living artists.

Each piece consists of a hand-drawn score and a set of instructions that is both openended and highly specific to each artist. There is an affinity with Fluxus practice, but with a striking level of care and attentiveness toward each subject-recipient – Chacon calls these compositions "a kind of portraiture". His score for Los Angeles "extreme vocalist" Carmina Escobar comprises drawings that indicate the mouth shape, volume and duration for a series of quiet screams, while Heidi Senungetuk's is drawn with the five-line musical staff pen the violinist and ethnomusicologist once gave him as a gift.

Many of these pieces engage with the limitations of Western classical notation to express more subtle aspects of Indigenous sonicities – Chacon's five-line pen draws staves that twist, slant and bend. For his wife Candice Hopkins, a round matrix maps the transformations that occur through the act of linguistic translation. Similar transformations appears in his shapeshifting piece for bassoonist and educator Jacqueline Wilson – acknowledging the code-switching that Native artists must perform in order to pursue academic careers.

The collection closes with a score for Buffy Sainte-Marie which requires the performer to simultaneously modulate two additional instruments alongside the voice. In its commentary, Chacon indicates that not only is his score inspired by the interplay of voice, guitar and modular synthesizer on Sainte-Marie's *Illuminations* (1969), it's also a homage to women like his mother who have had to walk multiple paths simultaneously.

Accompanying each scores is writings by the artists they were designed for. This inclusion makes *For Zitkála-Šá* more like a multivocal conversation than the work of a single composer. By engaging with the text, the audience becomes a part of this ongoing conversation: "Everyone who encounters this set of scores is invited to perform them, to better understand where they have been and where they are headed, and to consider all the sites of conflict they are placed between."
Emily Pothast

The Northern Silence: Journeys In Nordic Music & Culture
Andrew Mellor
Yale University Press Hbk 303 pp
Andrew Mellor – a freelance journalist and a former reviews editor of *Gramophone* magazine – began covering Nordic music in 2006, after a winter visit to the Norwegian coastal city of Bergen. Captivated by the landscape, the people, the architecture and the music, he made the concert halls of Scandinavia, Finland, Iceland and the Faroe Islands his beat, eventually moving permanently to Copenhagen in 2015. From there he has established himself as the region's leading English language commentator on its own music; his first book *The Northern Silence* is an account of his experiences and discoveries, sewn together out of numerous interviews, features and reviews written over that time.

Part musical survey, part travelogue, part inquiry into the Nordic soul, *The Northern Silence* explores the music and culture of the region along various axes: landscape, design, drink, social democracy, Scandi-noir, hygge and Janteloven (The Law of Jante: Scandinavia's traditional social code). These images may be familiar to anyone's imaginings of northern Europe, but Mellor advances them with care, finding not only support for each but also unpicking the points where the stereotype fades under scrutiny – particularly in the shadows of Covid and the recent rise of the far right. His perspective is that of an outsider trying to make sense of his surroundings, albeit one who is now deeply embedded in Nordic culture.

The most consistent running thread is musical, however: notably, Jean Sibelius's *Tapiola*, his last work before a final three decades of creative silence (Mellor made a documentary about Sibelius's tone poem for BBC Radio 3 in 2017). Although his book begins, obviously, inevitably even, with the three great Nordic symphonists – Norway's Edvard Grieg, Denmark's Carl Nielsen and Finland's Sibelius – Sibelius is the returning presence in whose music Mellor hears parallels to the northern forests, the light-filled architecture of Alvar Aalto, the effects of alcoholism and depression, and "Planet Earth's steady decrescendo" with climate change.

As well as the classical concert hall, which is his most comfortable setting, Mellor draws into his horizon musicians as diverse as Björk, Sigur Rós, Eurovision Song Contest-winning metal band Lordi and the yoiking Sámi reindeer herders of Lapland, preservers of Europe's oldest musical tradition. There are enlightening analyses of the outsized performances of Denmark and Finland (in particular) in the world of classical music – the number of world-class Danish composers, including Hans Abrahamsen, Pelle Gudmundsen-Holmgreen and Bent Sørensen, to have emerged from a population of 6 million; the dominance of Finnish conductors from even smaller numbers – as well as a brief survey of contemporary composers, including Bára Gísladóttir, Maja Ratkje and Niels Rønsholdt (although little mention of more avant garde musicians, such as Iceland's SLÁTUR collective or Norway's Trond Reinholdtsen).

However, some of the most enticing sections of the book are its unbeaten paths, and these include Mellor's accounts of the Silence Festival in the tiny Lapland village of Kaukonen in the Arctic Circle; and the extraordinary story of Kristian Blak, who through his Tutl record shop and label essentially created a contemporary musical culture in the Faroe Islands, a country with a professional symphony orchestra that serves a total national populace half the size of Woking.

Reporting equally from airports and ferries as remote forests and state of the art opera houses, Mellor is excellent company, with a keen ear and ability to set a scene. *The Northern Silence* is a loving, critical and enjoyable survey of a unique musical landscape.
Tim Rutherford-Johnson

Hungry Beat: The Scottish Independent Pop Underground Movement (1977–1984)
Douglas MacIntyre & Grant McPhee with Neil Cooper
White Rabbit Hbk 464 pp
In 1977, The Clash swayed into Edinburgh on their seismic White Riot tour. But it was the thrilling opening acts Subway Sect and The Slits who made an indelible impact on a new wave of musicians, artists, dreamers, schemers and entrepreneurs. Punk rock may have been a rallying call to action, but something else was also brewing.

Told in oral history format, *Hungry Beat* documents the sharp burst of creativity over seven years of Scottish post-punk. Focusing on two indie labels, it offers a deep dive into the impresarios behind them – Fast Product's Bob Last and Postcard's Alan Horne, and the musicians and artists who made up the creative artistic communities around them.

With its shortbread tin aesthetic, the bright, sparkling funked-up choppy guitars of Orange Juice, the crisply poised sound and literary savvy of Josef K and The Go-Betweens, Glasgow based Postcard Records hailed itself as "the Sound of Young Scotland" in a knowing high five to Motown. The pure pop sensibilities of Edinburgh's Fast Product had a jagged and abrasive sharp end, as exemplified by the dark edged mutant pop of Fire Engines, Scars and The Flowers. What unified both labels was a strong sense of community, making music, borrowing gear and putting on shows for each other.

Clocking in at over 400 pages, *Hungry Beat* also includes a brief reading list of books that inspired its authors, taking in Viv Albertine's memoir *Clothes Clothes Clothes, Music Music Music, Boys Boys Boys* and Simon Reynolds's *Rip It Up And Start Again*. Last and Horne emerge as radical visionary pioneers, and the sweeping list of eloquent interviewees include everyone from Edwyn Collins, Scars' Paul Research and Robert King, Fire Engines' Davy Henderson, Josef K's Paul Haig and Malcolm Ross, to dozens more key and peripheral players. The result is an energetic eyewitness account of a dynamic and influential scene, and the conditions under which it flourished. The majority of the book's interviews are from Grant McPhee's excellent and insightful 2015 documentary *Big Gold Dream*, which takes its name from the 1981 Fire Engines single.

One of the most compelling voices in *Hungry Beat* is The Flowers' Hilary Morrison. Not only did she help establish Fast Product, with her sharp eye and conceptual design and photography skills she was a key contributor to the label's aesthetic. Her insights into the creation of the iconic cover for the "Big Gold Dream" single, showing a mostly topless and oiled up image of Fire Engines covered with slabs of raw meat, are especially fascinating. It was her way of flipping the gendered commodification of sex, she explains. The photo shoot also comes with a hilarious backstory. A week before the shoot took place, there had been a break-in at her flat; mid-shoot the doorbell rang. "It was the police about my break-in and I had all these half naked, oiled up boys on my sitting room floor," she remembers. Ironically, she recalls, the supposedly edgy magazine *The Face* rejected the photos, calling them "disgusting and obscene".

In all, *Hungry Beat* is an exuberant celebration of pure independent DIY attitude, the galvanising bracings of community. As novelist Ian Rankin writes in his foreword, it was about shaking up the music industry during "an all-too-brief era where the short circuiting of that industry seemed viable".
Kiran Dass

Brady Marks monitoring a field recording in progress, 2016

Mark Timmings with recording engineer Eric Lamontagne

Wetland Project: Explorations In Sound, Ecology And Post-Geographical Art

Brady Marks & Mark Timmings (Editors)

Figure 1 Hbk 300 pp

A science fiction novelist, a sound artist, and a Member of Parliament walk into a marsh — and that's not the set-up for a joke. It's the modus operandi of the beautifully designed multimedia book *Wetland Project: Explorations In Sound, Ecology And Post-Geographical Art*.

Nor is that aforementioned trio – cyberpunk legend William Gibson, World Soundscape veteran Hildegard Westerkamp and former Canadian Green Party leader Elizabeth May – the first to enter the marsh. The book collects their writings alongside work from poets and various scholars, all the contributors following in the figurative footsteps of its two editors, the artists Brady Marks and Mark Timmings.

In 2016 Marks and Timmings founded the Wetland Project at a bog on one of the Gulf Islands near Vancouver, British Columbia. They brought along microphones to document the place's teeming biodiversity, thus blurring the line between sound art and acoustic ecology.

Since then, their Wetland Project has encompassed a plurality of approaches, including a 24 hour audio document from 2016 (done with Eric Lamontagne), transcriptions for musicians, an installation with Gabrielle Odowichuk that algorithmically associates sound frequencies with colours, and an annual "slow radio" broadcast in commemoration of Earth Day. This book is simply the latest way their Wetland Project has flowed.

And of course, before Marks and Timmings came, First Nations people populated the region in advance of the arrival of Western settlers. One descendant, poet Philip Kevin Paul, talks here about how a tape recorder risks severing sound from the circumstances in which it originated. Elsewhere in the book Laurie White warns the reader against listening to nature in a manner that "risks over- determining a narrative of loss". Dylan Robinson, like Paul of First Nations ancestry, connects their concerns in an essay that takes arrival, in all its forms, as its theme. Gibson contrasts the broader Wetland Project with the techno-quixotic aspirations of virtual reality. And the late Stephen Morris, to whom the book is dedicated, maps everyday sound to formal compositions via concepts dating from the Renaissance. Over ten percent of Wetland Project's pages contain sheet music resulting from Morris's approach.

There's also poetry from Susan McMaster, geochemical consciousness-raising from May, and colour – lots of colour. The book is a veritable peacock, each page a different solid hue, drawing from Odowichuk's algorithms, expressing a sound from the marsh. The result is a sort of reverse sonification.

And there are QR codes. These appear here and there to allow the reader to click through via a phone camera and hear specific instances from the marsh. On the one hand, the sounds are central to the overall topic. On the other, the QR codes are inelegant, even intrusive; going back and forth between the book and one's phone can break the concentration the endeavour deserves.

But the QR-triggered webpages are beautiful . They throb and glitch according to the given sounds. One for the red-winged blackbird's chirp lights up with synchronised flashes. The longer it plays, the more you realise the colours aren't uniformly bright or dark; between each high-pitched peak appear myriad shades, each for a quieter order of presence. You stop hearing the chirp, and listen out for what's in the background. Nothing could be more true to the spirit of Wetland Project.

Marc Weidenbaum

Nancy Angermeyer

Martin Newell in *The Jangling Man* (2022)

The Jangling Man: The Martin Newell Story
James Sharp (Director)
Sharp Film/Larson Media 2022, 113 mins

Early on in *The Jangling Man*, Martin Newell is dubbed "the essential English eccentric". It's an apt title for the dandily dressed poet, gardener and songwriter, best known for his cult band Cleaners From Venus. Since the late 1970s, Newell has subverted traditional pursuits of pop stardom, focusing on the craft of home recording rather than touring or promotion. Cutting a striking figure in his signature top hat, he lives contentedly in the small town of Wivenhoe, Essex, continuing his quest "to make *Revolver* in a garden shed".

In his teenage years, when he called himself Zap, Newell joined the glam rock band Plod before moving onto the prog unit Gypp. Guitarist Ian Peppercorn shares stories of the quirky young man who brought an energy flash to Gypp's live performances as he climbed up the walls of smalltown pubs. Yet even then, Newell was less interested in the band's 20 minute improvised epics than writing his own material. "Young Jobless", his debut solo single, courted controversy with its anti-establishment lyrics, setting a tone for his next five decades.

Inspired by the anarchist leanings of his drummer Lol Elliott, Newell self-released Cleaners' first cassettes in microscopic editions. His sublime melodic skills were showcased by classic songs like "Only A Shadow" and "Corridor Of Dreams", while a sardonic sense of humour permeated "Be An Idiot Popstar". Newell's fiercely autodidactic attitude earned fans such as XTC's Andy Partridge, The Damned's Captain Sensible and New Model Army's Peter Nice, each of whom became collaborators. In archival footage of The Brotherhood Of Lizards – a duo with Nice who embarked on a bicycle tour of the UK – Newell has rarely looked happier.

The Jangling Man's most moving scene occurs when Newell shares his experiences of neurodivergence (he describes himself as "Aspergic"). During early tours, his self-destructive tendencies caused immense emotional difficulties, so he decided to stay home instead. When he recalls the choice to become a "pop poet", Newell explains that he finally "wanted to be popular instead of obscure". To his surprise, he became one of England's most prolifically published wordsmiths, earning enough money to buy the Wivenhoe house he still lives in today.

As the film reaches the early 2010s, Captured Tracks label founder Mike Sniper explains how difficult it was to get Newell onboard for a series of reissues, the latter asking him "what bits of fucking off do you not understand?" Eventually, Newell realised "you can't polish a turd, but you can roll it in glitter", agreeing to the North American releases that introduced his lo-fi pop gems to a new generation. When the credits list the names who funded the documentary on Kickstarter, there are many musicians, including Limp Bizkit's Fred Durst.

Much of *The Jangling Man* focuses on contemporary interviews with Newell, proving how his madcap sense of humour and eccentric approach to life have only intensified with time. He still bikes around Wivenhoe, still wears his top hat, and still records songs in his living room. On his 2022 album *That London*, the most noticeable development is an upgrade from four-track to eight-track. "I can be as young as I want to be in the studio, so that's what I do," concludes Newell. "I make nice songs for people."
Jesse Locke

Courtesy Captured Tracks

The Lost Record
Alexandra Cabral & Ian Svenonius (Directors)
Alexandra Cabral & Ian Svenonius 2021, 76 mins
Described by its makers as "a sci-fi rock 'n' roll fantasy essay film", *The Lost Record* is the first film by post-hardcore polymath Ian Svenonius and his Escape-ism bandmate Alexandra Cabral, based on their 2020 album of the same name. It follows an unnamed girl rebelling against homogenous culture in a critique of the commodification of music – a longtime touchstone for Svenonius, from his time as frontman of The Make-Up to his recent book of interviews with dead musicians. He has always – to paraphrase *Spinal Tap* – operated at the fine line between stupid and clever, and the film is no exception, leaving viewers uncertain whether they're watching an attempted grand statement on What Rock 'N' Roll Means, or a frivolous collage of stylish transgression.

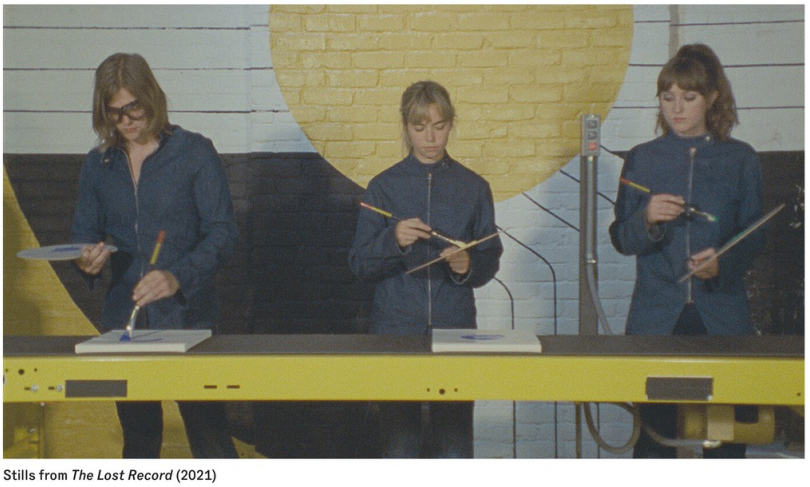
The Lost Record is set in a retro-futurist Los Angeles where only one record ("The #1 Record") is allowed to exist, and is used to control the populace by preaching a totalitarian value system. The actual song is super catchy electropop, ironically sung in deadpan monotone and containing no reference to control – suggesting its true message is subliminal and hidden. Pauline Jorry plays a girl who has found the titular forbidden lost record in a bargain bin and begins to fall for its charms. Instead of listening to its songs, she caresses its grooves, stares at it endlessly and talks to it each night on pseudo-dates. The two are shot amusingly like lovers in bed ("I can feel vulnerable with you"). The record senses her frustration with the status quo, promising her release and fulfilment, but ends up manipulating her for its greater aims – to become the new #1 Record.

In the midst of Record Store Days and a somewhat hollow mainstream vinyl boom, the film's critique of object fetishism feels timely. There are moments celebrating the transformative power of art, such as when we hear music from the lost record for the first time, and its speaking voice morphs into Svenonius's familiar yelp, triggering a bacchanalian dance from the people gathered round. An uncynical scene of joy, or characteristic arrogance from Svenonius? The film draws connections between art and capitalist goods as totems of longing, desire and self, although this is handled clunkily in scenes of the girl at work in a dystopian creative factory, churning out paintings on a production line.

By far the standout elements are the film's costumes, makeup and production design, which make for an expertly rendered take on 20th century underground aesthetics – a style well established by Cabral in her work in art film and editorial design. A voice-only cameo by Henry Rollins aside, it is populated by cool LA types, whose characterful faces add much to the personality of the film.

Much like Svenonius's music, the film wears its influences on its sleeve, from the opening shots of a biker gang – a knowing tribute to Kenneth Anger's *Scorpio Rising* – to its Warholian style and Factory-esque cast of characters. Although steeped in Hollywood mysticism, its most pertinent comparison point is British film maker Peter Watkins, and especially his 1967 masterpiece *Privilege*, which also critiques the totalitarian tendencies of pop music culture.

Where that film was vicious and singular, *The Lost Record* is of course more derivative – and doesn't claim to be otherwise. Its aesthetic and conceptual schtick may be familiar, but it has heaps of character and style, making it fun, titillating company for an hour or so.
Claire Biddles



Alexandra Cabral & Ian Svenonius

Stills from *The Lost Record* (2021)

On Location

Festivals, concerts, clubs

KMRU

Semibreve

Various venues, Braga, Portugal

As I sit in the monumental church at Santuário do Bom Jesus do Monte, towering across the landscape six kilometres from Braga, Félicia Atkinson and Violeta Azevedo take a bow at the close of their intimate and hushed performance, and the rush of the applause melds into the sound of a storm of truly Biblical proportions outside, with thunder, lightning and a month's worth of rain in a day.

The extreme weather would ordinarily be a challenge for some, but not here. The venue is packed to the arched rafters. Indeed, Semibreve is a festival unique in many ways, and wet feet are the least of their concerns for this, the opening night. The sensitive and considered curation brings audiences into spaces where music opens up the architecture.

The next day moves between the grandiose Theatro Circo by day and the industrial concrete stature of Gnration creative space at night. Seated in the theatre listening to Joseph Kamaru aka KMRU is an otherworldly bodily experience; as an industrial strength granular hum vibrates throughout the space, Kamara manipulates a Soma Lyra synth and effects pedals. The temporal slip of time at points echoes Coil's *Time Machines*, offering us a bottomless abyss, almost hallucinogenic.

With only a few minutes' breathing space, we are then invited into the incense coated world of dread-inducing drones from Stephen O'Malley and François J Bonnet. With each alternating between guitar and tabletop synths and effects, the performance is a highlight of the festival. Ground-trembling guitars disintegrate and splinter into the sonic field and I'm reminded of O'Malley's contributions to Jóhann Jóhannsson's *Mandy* film score, as well as the more undulating atmospheric works of Nurse With Wound. With no flashy lighting or smoke machines, the music wins the audience over.

Already busy enough that a queue has formed, one in and one out, I arrive at Gnration in time to experience the prismatic, plastic sounds of Gábor Lázár. Staring into his laptop, emotionless, his music turns the space inside out, as a hyperactive lighting engineer and smoke machine operator combine forces to illustrate his elastic dance music, offering the sensory environment of a darkened rave inside this compressed space.

It's then over to Chicago's Jana Rush to lead the crowd in an evocative freeform rhythmic session, wondrous in its flickering, surging energy. It's a masterful exercise in broken, disorienting dance music, creating an euphoric atmosphere, as opposing tempos go to battle in the darkness. After Lázár's extended take on flexed out beats, it's a joy to merge the body into the sound field and fall into Rush's rolling basslines and diva-esque vocal samples. Rush demonstrates the longevity and developing language of footwork and its continuing lexicon, and with that, I'm off to bed.

The discovery that a hacker was busily siphoning off sums of money from my bank accounts while I was at the shows rather taints the night, but thankfully the next day Malcolm Pardon's solemn live set on a busy Saturday afternoon, in the panoramic splendour of Capela Imaculada do Seminário Menor, offers an almost spiritual experience, the lonely earthy sounds of piano and synth spiralling out across the immense space.

Back at Theatro Circo, Maxwell Sterling presents a hyperreal stylised show, featuring heavily processed synths and smeared sonic stimulation, accompanied by Stephen McLaughlin's surreal AI visuals, which balances out well with Alva Noto's muscular and thunderous techno maximalist workout session to close the evening.

Sunday arrives with Jan Jelinek ensconced in the Salão Medieval da Reitoria da Universidade do Minho, the audience for this sold-out show seated all around. Jelinek sits before a modular Eurorack system and a small mixer and proceeds to unravel a sonic lucid dream, a montage of environmental sounds, electronic burblings and even the tiniest glimpse of Ketty Lester's "Love Letters" breaking through the surface at the close.

Still enveloped in this haunted dream, I dash through the streets of Braga, as locals step aside for a volley of dark clad figures, to ensure I'm in time for Caterina Barbieri at Theatro Circo. Dry ice and roaming lights accompany the solitary figure of Barbieri on the gigantic stage, as she air dances with one arm, manipulating her modular synth and projecting a series of ecstatic escalating melodies into the space. Exiting into the night air, it's finally stopped raining and Semibreve has woven its magic again.

Robin Rimbaud

Midwife

Cafe Oto, London, UK

A thick silence descends on Oto's small space in Dalston, East London. The audience has gathered to see Madeline Johnston aka Midwife's quiet devastation unfold like a smothering cloak. Even the humming air conditioner gets dirty looks from the reverential onlookers.

This is the Denver musician's first time in London and she can't quite believe it. "I'm never going to be over this," she gushes in between her songs from the void. Crucially, Midwife rarely expresses her intense emotions louder than a whisper that's seductive in the way lethargy and melancholia can be.

Her mid-pandemic releases were sister albums exploring different aspects of grief. The first, *Forever*, a meditation on the passing of her friend, gives way to collective grief and confusion on the exquisite *Luminol*.

Tonight she opens with the *Luminol* track "Colorado", which immediately introduces themes of displacement, distance and loneliness as Johnston sings, *"All my friends are in Chicago/All my friends are in LA… How much more death can one person take?"*. Addressing the disconnect from her spread out support network, it comes across as something of a triumph played in a sold out room full of people. On *Luminol*'s standout "God Is A Cop", she murmurs *"I can't kill the evil thoughts/I can't turn it off"*, before doing just that, leaving an uncomfortable silence hanging in the air while the crowd in front of her holds its breath.

The *Forever* allbum highlight "2018" speaks to Midwife's grief: "*Get the fuck away from me/2018*". But even this small expression of angst is squashed out by the time we get to "2020", with its desolate note, *"…it feels like heaven is so far away"*.

Midwife's music calls into question the very notion of heaviness – can quiet sounds be heavy? The answer is, yes of course, in Johnston's case. Midwife's shoegaze meets dream pop, which she self-defines as "HEAVEN METAL", is heavier than Slayer. Her dynamic range rarely rises above a close whisper into her tele-microphone, but when she does raise her voice, you feel it. During "Name", she yells *"Your god hates me"* into the silence, and the contrast is so stark it's painful – all our ears are tuned into a completely different set of dynamics.

But even without such moments of rising volume, this is a heavy gig. The heaviness is evident in lyric repetition, fuzzed out guitar, and her songs' inescapable sense of mourning. We've all lost something during the past three or four years, and a Midwife gig seems like the perfect outlet for those who have experienced loss to come together and lament the distance between friends, an absent loved one, or even just the burn out of energy during two years of pandemic and lockdowns, and then being expected to immediately return to normalcy without any advance preparations.

Notably, Johnston wears over-ear headphones when performing, ensuring that the snare of sorrow is solid enough to prevent any of us listeners escaping. But then this isn't music that dreams of escape; it is the very submission of self to despair, of succumbing to whatever quiet melancholia the world has to offer up next.

Rosie Esther Solomon

Adriano Ferreira Borges/Semibreve

Object Collection: *Automatic Writing*

The Brick, New York, US

Robert Ashley's 1979 work *Automatic Writing* is a deeply intimate and enigmatic work. Somewhere between performance and tape piece, the work is built around the involuntary utterances due to Ashley's self-diagnosed Tourette's syndrome. Those sounds are central to the work, but other elements – Mimi Johnson's French monologue, a Moog wash and a disco bassline – easily overwhelm Ashley's soft stammers. For anyone else to do the piece seems, not an injustice exactly, but nevertheless preposterous.

Ashley's recording is so spatial that it begs to be realised in a room in real time, and so strangely disorienting that it's hard to imagine how it could be. Object Collection have done the unimaginable quite successfully by envisioning the piece as a staged work, conceived with the blessing of the composer. They have presented the work on a few occasions since their initial realisation in 2014 (the same year Ashley died) and revised it for five performances at The Brick in Brooklyn.

As with much of Ashley's work, it's as difficult to pay attention as it is to be unaffected. The mind drifts, but with the uncanny feeling of it being someone else's mind. It is, either in Ashley's recording or in Object Collection's production, a deeply subversive work – not politically subversive but psychologically subversive. It's psychedelic in a way that The Zombies or Strawberry Alarm Clock could never have imagined.

The transfixing Turkish actor Fulya Peker is at the front of the stage on the final night of the run, taking on Ashley's whispers and sputters. She's seated in a large chair between two screens, hidden behind dark sunglasses and motionless, as if about to interrogate the audience. Three other performers are on stage facing, like Peker, away from the centre.

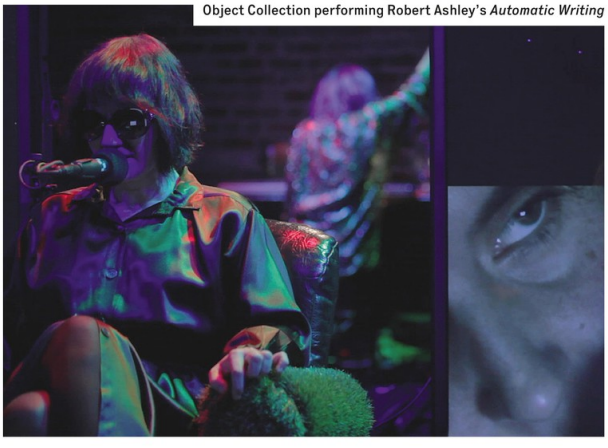
It takes several minutes to orientate and determine just who's doing what, even with the activities of the three others being projected in real time onto the screens flanking Peker. Guitarist John Hastings is to the right and director Kara Feely at left, providing the second voice, in German instead of French, occasionally dropping in English phrases, embedding a suggestion that the listener has missed something (did she just quote Aretha Franklin?). The quiet club music comes in almost immediately and is even more convincing as an outside intrusion in the small theatre.

The figure in the rear, Paula Matthussen, concocts visual impressions with coloured liquids (as seen on screen), apparently also producing an electronic sound bed below the voices and electric guitar playing slow, clean, single notes with heavy reverb. The guitar is an odd choice, it grounds the work as being something more musical than Ashley's incidental and seemingly almost accidental score. When the guitar drops out for an extended period around midpoint, the scene becomes unmoored.

The screens change. Coloured lights change. Occasionally, things change. The remote disco music returns at some point (meaning it had left at some point). The screen on the left features a purple haired Matthussen painting a green cube with white powder atop a sheet of satiny red fabric. Things change again, though not toward any climax.

After about an hour, the lights shut off with an audible click. It ultimately proves to be more disorienting than the original. In Ashley's recording, you can't picture what's happening in the studio. In Object Collection's staging, you can see what's happening, but you still don't know.

Kurt Gottschalk



Object Collection performing Robert Ashley's *Automatic Writing*

Zubin Kanga of Cyborg Soloists

Sisi Burn (Zubin Kanga); Travis Just (Object Collection)

Cyborg Soloists

Cafe Oto, London, UK

Zubin Kanga's *Steel On Bone* begins with the composer attacking the venue's piano strings with a pair of metallic rods. The percussive sounds are sampled in real time and manipulated by the composer's movements. With the help of multi-sensor MiMU gloves, Kanga warps the samples, sending them through a series of time bending effects. Moving in and out of the piano, he looks as though he is physically extracting soundwaves from the instrument and threading them through the air. Inspired by medical documentaries, as well as the samurai films of Akira Kurosawa, *Steel On Bone* posits abrasive violence against the notions of delicacy that you may normally associate with the piano.

The performances tonight have all been commissioned by Cyborg Soloists, Kanga's technology focused research initiative, and most of the pieces are performed by him. These projects utilise artificial intelligence and motion sensors to explore music's relationship with innovative technologies.

For Nina Whiteman's *Cybird Cybird*, Kanga lifts his arms in exaggerated wing-like movements. Using Movesense sensors, he creates a series of electronic chirps, which are then mirrored on the piano keys. AI-generated images of bird hybrids are projected on the wall, while a robotic voice offers motivational advice. Whiteman's piece imagines cyborg avians to be ubiquitous in our chaotic environment and is partially inspired by a satirical conspiracy theory proposing that birds aren't real.

Nwando Ebizie's *I Will Fix Myself (Just Circles)* is dominated by mechanised voices – underscored by Kanga's piano and a Moog emitting theremin-like tones – that read passages from various sources. Principal among them is Blake Lemoine's conversations with LaMDA (a Google AI that Lemoine helped build and considered sentient). Phrases like *"I do not have the ability to feel sad for the deaths of others"* suggest that this monologue imitates sentience, but is detached from the nuances that make us human.

The UK premiere of Neil Luck's 40 minute work *Whatever Weighs You Down* begins and ends with Kanga dragging a microphone across the floor. Large TV monitors flank the stage showing the composer-performer James Oldham, tied by a rope to another protagonist, tugging his way through a dilapidated labyrinth. As the men break through to a chapel-like space, a female voice lists phrases synonymous with overcoming. Luck told me that he sees their journey as a "Sisyphean struggle upwards, or a kind of reverse katabasis" layered with failure and resistance.

Musically, there are three movements. The first suggests descent, with the pianist's melodies complemented by electronic sounds that move down the frequency range. The second is about communication or, as Luck put it "implied understanding".

Black and white projections of the Deaf performance artist Chisato Minamimura appear, showing her hands mid-sign, glitching like electronic doves, while Kanga's MiMU gloves echo their movements. Composed for left hand piano, the third movement is reflective. Minamimura appears upside down, like a half-forgotten fragment from a falling dream, while a series of incomplete sentences flash up onscreen.

Luck talks about the material for *Whatever Weighs You Down* "as sedimentary layers of rock". In fact, all of tonight's compositions are conceptually loaded. Some of the contextual information is only hinted at, incomplete. Watching the performances leaves you with the impression that you are the AI, trying to compute an endless stream of data and taking days to piece together what it all means.

Ilia Rogatchevski

The Acousmonium

Akousma

Maison de la Radio, Paris, France

I always feel a twang of envy during concert trips to Paris. Thanks largely to the continuing Groupe des Recherches Musicales founded in 1958 by Pierre Schaeffer, concerts tend to occupy large, well-funded and well-attended venues. Akousma 2022 takes place at Maison de la Radio, home of Radio France.

The stage is set with composer and former GRM director François Bayle's Acousmonium, designed in 1970 – an assortment of loudspeakers of different make, model, size, shape, arranged around the stage and auditorium.

The installation is by no means symmetrical, its purpose being to add visual display, tonal colour, depth and immediacy to the diffusion of prerecorded sounds. The composers perform a live spatialisation of their work from the mixing desk, where each fader and pan-control is connected to a different loudspeaker.

Saturday's concert, curated by current GRM director François J Bonnet, opens with Erell Latimier's *Stay Still*, a vocal piece that skilfully navigates the multi-speaker set up, with spoken words moving around the space, distorting then gradually refocusing. Latimier's sultry red stage lighting crossfades to blues and pinks for Hans Tutschku's *Provenance-émergence*, powerful metallic clangs, hints of cityscape, a train in tunnel echo overlaid with almost ear-splitting high sustained tones.

Veteran electroacoustician Christian Zanési's *Oscillations Électriques* opens with red lighting and a buzzing, throbbing, static unfolds, flapping like a loose end of tape on a spinning spool. Lionel Marchetti performs *Le Silence*, a cinematic haunting theatre of wolf-like cries, slow rattles, muffled slowed-down distant trains and occasional diagonal knife-sharpening metallic slices darting across the auditorium.

There is a sense in the last three pieces of a now familiar, almost traditional set of electroacoustic sound palettes and spatialisation techniques. As Beatriz Ferreyra steps up to the mixing desk to perform *Esprits De La Terre* we are hurled into a fresh dynamic soundworld. Her sounds are evocative without being prescriptively cinematic – surreal sonic characters, carefully structured point source flourishes jumping between loudspeakers, merging into swirling overlaid textures, rattles, shakes and rolls, with characteristic vocalisations, glissandi and whisperings, playing the mixing desk with the intensity of a musician with their instrument.

The personal high spot of the festival is meeting Ferreyra the next day at a side street cafe in the Plaisance district where she is staying with her lifetime friend, singer Simone Rist. We discuss her concert. Soundcheck completed, she'd returned to her room for a pre-concert siesta. She lay down, mentally rehearsing her performance, a live eight-track diffusion, imagining her hands on faders, moving them in pairs or threes to create a sense of pulling, stretching the sound from each loudspeaker towards the one opposite so the sounds would seem to reach out across diagonals or flick from side to side, across front and back. It is precisely how her performance was later delivered and received.

These two women, Ferreyra in her eighties and Rist at 94, are the living backbone of early musique concrète. As technical assistants to Pierre Schaeffer in the 1960s, they composed tape experiments with endless dedication, skill, also much humour and mischief, including, so Ferreyra told me, when Vladimir Ussachevsky visited the studio with a present of Russia's finest caviar for Schaeffer, who was late. Ferreyra and Rist insisted Ussachevsky open the caviar and, agreeing reluctantly, he watched in despair as they devoured the lot.

Jo Hutton

Abdullah Ibrahim: EFG London Jazz Festival

Barbican, London, UK

The Barbican is full up to see Abdullah Ibrahim play solo. The audience is almost on its feet before he even steps onto the stage, accompanied to the blindingly spotlighted piano by his wife Marina Umari. At the age of 88, Ibrahim has as many years behind him as there are piano keys in front, and the way he sits down and lifts his hands speaks something of that silent symmetry.

The first struck chord rings somewhere between the routine – practise! as he likes to repeat in interviews – and the religious. The music is balladic and sentimental, an improvisation in and around the angular sweetness that he has been turning inside out and upside down for over six decades. There is a softness to his style that has heightened since I saw him play solo ten years ago in Manchester – a softness that can be heard too on his 2021 release *Solotude*. This somnolent sound, intimate in spite of the concert hall surroundings, is paradoxically amplified by the lack of amplification. Ibrahim plays acoustically, and the audience has to hold in its breath to hear the quiet parts (for those further back, coughs or knocked drinks were, I'm told, a problem). This makes for an atmosphere that is at once sacrosanct and sleepy, inducing either silent prayer or slumber.

The first 20 minutes or so are improvised, the music remaining songlike and recognisably his without recourse to any compositions. Though there are still elements of Thelonious Monk in his playing – occasionally he likes to hammer a flat ninth a few times in a row as if to check the dissonance is still working – some of the angularity has given way to the lush consonance of his other influence and early supporter, Duke Ellington. Still, as it always has been, the music is all his own, and that only becomes more apparent as he begins to intersperse fragments of his songs into the meandering suite.

One of the first that I recognised was "District 6", with its brooding, steam-powered vamp in the left hand and its creeping, chromatic melody in the right. The title recalls the area of Cape Town where Ibrahim attended high school and started playing bebop in the 1950s. He once described the area as a "city within a city" – a "valve" to release some of the pressure of apartheid, where people could mix freely before it was designated a 'whites only' area by the 1966 Group Areas Act, leading to forced removals and demolition.

Bringing the music to a close, Ibrahim faces the standing ovation. Then, instead of leaving, stood precariously by the piano stool, he raises one hand to cradle his head and begins to sing. As with his piano playing, it's almost as though he's singing to himself. His voice oscillates between a rousing call – evoking South African choral musics – and a croaking blues murmur that makes mention of cotton fields, conjuring those in his home country or the Deep South.

"Jump for joy – don't you grieve, little Eve", he sings sorrowfully, before closing with the following lines, their sadness tempered by a perfect cadence: *"Welcome home, welcome home … and the day I return to the land where I was born, there was no one to welcome me home"*.

Gabriel Bristow

Aude Paget/©INA

Henry Threadgill's Zooid

Anthony Braxton (left) and Carl Testa

Henry Threadgill's Zooid and The New Acoustic Quartet led by **Anthony Braxton** play a double bill combining freshness and wonder with the cohesion of established ensembles. By **Gabriel Bristow**

EFG London Jazz Festival: Henry Threadgill's Zooid + Anthony Braxton

Barbican, London, UK

Braxton is up first for this glittering double bill of the old guard avant garde. His New Acoustic Quartet is made up of musicians a generation or so below: bassist and multi-instrumentalist Carl Testa, drummer Mariá Portugal and trumpeter Susana Santos Silva. This piano-less quartet – arguably the quintessential free jazz formation since Ornette Coleman first arrived in New York – is in fact not quite entirely acoustic.

As well as alto, soprano and sopranino saxophones, Braxton has a laptop and foot pedals that trigger a selection of celestial soundscapes. These play out over long periods as the quartet make their way through the long, complex score, ripping pages off the stand between breaths and following their leader's fervent conductor's thumb. Each of the players appears to have a great deal of freedom inside of Braxton's composition. Passages of carefully constructed homophony are broken up by improvisations that swarm, but sparsely. Throughout the piece, Silva's vivid tone cuts through with anti-clinical precision. Her playing ranges from crisply struck bell to gargling drainpipes, all of it measured, held by an acute sense of musical space. The band murmurs together, stutters eloquently. Amid the million notes there's a sense of understatement, of contemplation; something like a long, communal whispering in the dark.

Threadgill's Zooid is up next. The latest in the multi-instrumentalist and composer's long history of musical projects, the quintet are made up of Jose Davila (trombone, tuba), Liberty Ellman (guitar), Elliot Humberto Kavee (drums), Christopher Hoffman (cello), as well as Threadgill himself (alto saxophone, flute, bass flute). Zooid have existed for two decades, and once you realise how long it took the musicians to master the complex procedures behind this beguiling music, you understand why the leader would be keen to keep them together. I had assumed the music's ungraspable harmonic movement was essentially the result of lengthy written out chords changes that seem never to repeat. It is, however, what Threadgill calls an "intervallic language": a form of serialism that produces endless variations of improvised counterpoint. "All you know is you hear a harmony in my music, but you can't really find it," as the composer once put it.

The band settle into a mesmeric, midtempo contrapuntal groove, the backdrop for a series of fractal solos. At the start of Davila's turn, Threadgill walks around to adjust the placement of the tuba mic. The strange low surging of that beast-like brass instrument sounds especially noble as it pushes up under the music's obscure pulsations. Threadgill's saxophone sound is typically solid, yearning, and serrated (a million miles from Braxton's acidic translucency), cutting thick, angular slices of melody out of the composition's structure.

The set is made up of one long piece and two short ones, though the underlying concept gives them a strong family resemblance. The moments of contrast come when the group split into smaller units. One such moment arrives when Threadgill's flute meshes breathily with muted trombone over Kavee's resonant gongs. Another sees alto and tuba locked in a hollow embrace. The music's endless variation is finally punctured by a delicately spiked melody played in unison by saxophone and guitar, which draws the concert to a close. ☐

Mark Allan/Barbican

Come

Cafe Oto, London, UK

I have been absorbed by this band for nigh-on 30 years, but I still can't quite get a handle on what Come are. Perhaps that's why on a school night I come on pilgrimage to Dalston to once again try and figure out this four-piece miracle. After Come finish their set, I stagger off into the night still none the wiser, but with every single synapse on fire.

A rock 'n' roll band? Certainly, and tonight in the line-up that gave us their key masterpieces *Eleven : Eleven* and *Don't Ask Don't Tell*, they're an ear-razing mind riot, guitars tangled and twisted around each other but coalescing into this gorgeous wall of riffs and ideas and whammy-barred bends and shadows from the moment "Bell" and "Finish Line" come surging out.

So yes, full tilt, dazzling rock 'n' roll. And yet . . . there's something definitively un-American about Come, something touched by the hand of old Europa that puts them beyond just being a stunning last gasp for rock, a modernist almost Satie-esque shape and frame to their melodic ideas, caught between the twin guitars of Chris Brokaw and Thalia Zedek, coming from a very post-punk place of intrigue and suggestiveness.

With its current ubiquity in critical gobbledegook I find it difficult to use the word liminal at the moment, but no other word quite describes the utterly unique place Zedek's lyrics always inhabit. Between worlds, but also between ego and evanescence, a spiritual and political homelessness that tonight makes "Recidivist" and "Hurricane" still coruscatingly vivid, especially to those of us who recall how these songs first came to us and offered a mirror to our shattered personae, now astonished that these songs are actually sounding better than ever.

Come have been on the road awhile this time around and all that playing has made them diamond tight, all kinds of loose, the live conjuration of a magic beyond their protagonists that only truly great bands ever glimpse. Genuine dropped jaws across the front rows. And a divine tinnitus you never want to end.

A word by the way about the sheer majesty of the sound tonight – this was my first visit to Oto and I was concerned my prejudices about sonic events and happenings would result in a neutered, overly artful mix: I couldn't have been more wrong. I haven't heard a rock band sound this detailed yet driven, this deliciously noisy yet pungently melodic in years. No attempt to make this small venue sound like a stadium, just the realisation of what a stunning thing it is when these four old friends plug in and play.

"Wrong Side" and "Submerge" reveal something astonishing: this is a million miles away from simply a reunion, everyone here has got impossibly better than they were, and every moment is given an entirely fresh impetus and power by Zedek and Brokaw's clear delight in playing these songs again. A viciously pivoting "In/Out" brings us to the closer "Brand New Vein", and it's only afterwards that I think of the irony. Still a total fix, contact high, delight I'm happy to queue in the shooting gallery for. One of the greatest bands ever, sounding better than ever. My gig of the year by a moonlight mile.

Neil Kulkarni

Zinc And Copper: Well Tuned Brass 2022

KM28, Berlin, Germany

Zinc And Copper operate at the frontier of brass experimentation, with a penchant for microtonal music and just intonation. Founded in 2005 by microtonal tuba inventor Robin Hayward and expanded in 2014 to include composer/musicians Hilary Jeffery (trombone, trumpet, electronics) and Elena Margarita Kakaliagou (French horn), they have garnered a reputation as a cherished staple of Berlin's echtzeitmusik (real time music) scene – a term coined in the 1990s to distinguish a then younger generation of musicians in the German capital who resisted free jazz, experimental or avant garde categorisations.

The trio modestly describe their sound as characterised by the warmth of low brass. This is certainly true. But on both evenings in Neukölln's cosy, stageless KM28 venue, their delicate approach to playing often extremely quiet and detailed compositions on instruments usually associated with loudness is – visibly, for many in attendance – nothing short of cathartic.

The theme of the first evening is the mute, both as a tool to change timbre and volume, as well as a reference to voicelessness. Robin Hayward's composition *Gruntled* starts things off quiet, his rumbling tuba initially competing with throat clearing but eventually, in ascending glissando, morphing into a growl – then back into a purr. Using the mute to blur the tone, the piece creates spatial illusions: a distant foghorn; a sound directly in front of your face; obscured voices communicating in the rhythm of syntax, just enough air circulating in the valves for the guttural vibrations to form a subterranean tone.

This is followed by a 20 minute explanation of *Speaking Mutes* by the trio's guest, Mexican-Dutch composer Juan Felipe Waller, who describes the musical goal of the composition as "giving the mute a voice". To this end, Waller attaches speakers as mutes to the horns of the trio's instruments, from which he plays and tweaks sinusoidal tones. He additionally inserts microphones into the instruments' bells to create a feedback loop.

Usually explaining music before performing it is a drag, but here it is like a magician revealing a trick that never fails to astound. From the first tones, the speakers visibly vibrate atop the instruments, creating expansive electroacoustic vistas within the sounds of the brass, which together never seem to stop turning harmonic corners. The trio pause and play only with the feedback through adjusting their valves. Sinewaves continue to drone through their rattling mutes, only to be sucked back into the modulating low brass clouds. The first evening sets the bar high.

The second evening maintains that energy. The first set is brilliantly assembled, featuring, as Hilary Jeffery put it, a "Feldman sandwich", with Jeffery's own *Long Forest* bookended by renditions of the late American composer's oddly unsettling *A Very Short Trumpet Piece*. Feldman's composition features a series of melodies played twice, evoking a teacher-student relationship where the student insecurely repeats the melody back to the teacher. Eventually, the melodies swap and it becomes unclear what the nature of the relationship is between the two.

This makes Jeffery's own composition feel even more solemn, with the trio sliding between drones and microtonal harmonies, meeting and cleaving and eventually settling in side by side in just intonation. The sound bathes the audience in the warmest vibrational parallels, augmented by a slight digital delay used less as an effect than an additional ghostly vibration. At the end of the piece, Jeffery quickly picks up his trumpet and launches back into Feldman.

Well Tuned Brass, Zinc And Copper's final 40 minute performance, feels like a kind of infinite musical gesture, resolving and unresolving with wavering intervals and complementary timbres, often buzzing with throat-singing-like overtones of Kakaliagou's French horn. Much of what Zinc And Copper does makes the listener aware of the physical perception of pulsing air. Sometimes it has the power to steal the breath from your lungs.

AJ Samuels

Thumbscrew

The Vortex, London, UK

For the past decade, Thumbscrew – Mary Halvorson, guitar, Michael Formanek, bass and Tomas Fujiwara, drums – have maintained a distinctively knotty sound: hyper focused, yet pensive, ascetic, but with a sense of fantasy. The two shows the band played at London's newly refurbished Vortex Jazz Club in October exemplified those virtues.

A trio of composers, Thumbscrew's improvisations are shaped to the contours of their compositions, fashioned with an ear to improvisation: sections, sketches, moods; studies in grooves of a different sort, the band a consistently unpredictable machine. Playing electroacoustic guitar, Halvorson's tone is distinctively clean, augmented with judicious effects, most notably, the volume pedal-generated tremolo which affords her playing a wry, sardonic vocality: speech-like, rather than song-like, insisting on telling you something that's not necessarily easy to grasp.

On the opening number, Thumbscrew's version of a fanfare, a telling pause is built into the composition like an unexpected breeze coursing through; on the second, Halvorson's shimmering tremolo briefly transforms her into a surfer Segovia over dancing, chattering brushes and Formanek's thrummed, rising counterpoint.

On covers, the band demonstrate a fine ear for sentiment, not sentimentality, while gently subverting structural expectations. Herbie Nichols's wistfully optimistic, if regretful "House Party Starting" is afforded a fine, chugging solo from Fujiwara, the party stop-starting as he moves from amble to dance at the drop of a hat. After abstracting out in the centre with a fine Halvorson solo, Mingus's "Orange Was The Color Of Her Dress, Then Silk Blue" ends with a kind of collapsing coda, while on Jimmy Rowles's yearning "The Peacocks", Fujiwara dispenses with the snare entirely, the piece fading out in a chorused whisper.

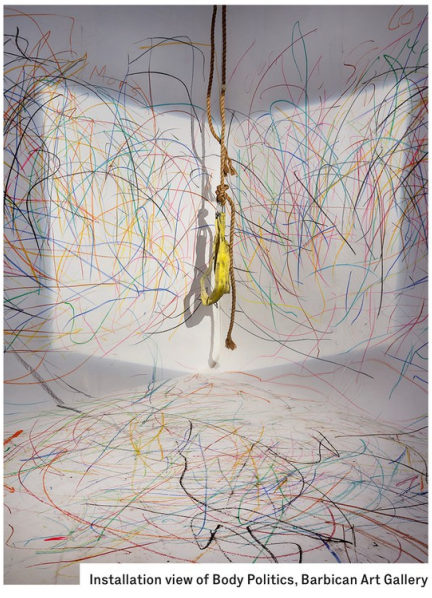
Of the two shows, the first is more musingly restrained. The second leans towards greater harmonic and textural abstraction while also picking up energy and volume, though always with an ear to textural variety. A fortissimo drum solo is followed by a drumless passage in which guitar and bass lead each other in a gradually slowing melodic chase; on another piece, Formanek modifies his bass with a delay pedal while Fujiwara, soloing on mallets, varies the pitch of his snare with his elbow.

Meanwhile, the influence of Anthony Braxton, Halvorson's teacher, manifests in a number of march pieces, either by Braxton himself, or Braxton-like. Such pieces are laced with humour and verve, as when Fujiwara switches straight from an improvised solo to a complicated, composed drum pattern without blinking an eye. The band come back for an encore: a piece of buoyantly lyrical swing with a shimmering, delay-drenched interlude called "Should Be Cool".

The trio are experts of the neat ending, the perfected placed cymbal stroke, bass pluck, or hanging guitar note: on the night, a surprising but decisive Fujiwara cymbal caps things off perfectly. As ever, Thumbscrew deliver music that is elegantly unexpected: everything slightly aslant, in all the right ways.

David Grundy

Objects from Carolee Schneemann's *Noise Bodies* (1965)



Installation view of Body Politics, Barbican Art Gallery

Eye Body: 36 Transformative Actions For Camera (1963)

Marcus J Leith (installation view); Lia Toby/Getty Images

Carolee Schneemann
Carolee Schneemann: Body Politics
Barbican Art Gallery, London, UK

Vibrant, direct and noisy: which is exactly as Carolee Schneemann: Body Politics should be. From its opening rooms, filled with the Cézanne-influenced canvases of her early years, to the rhythmical thwack of a mop hitting a TV monitor (*War Mop*, 1983, some way downstairs), there's a straightforwardness to this show that does justice to the uncontainable oeuvre of an artist who moved to New York in the early 1960s with the desire of expanding painting away from a flat plane to a tactile, performative sensuousness.

This is the first major show dedicated to Schneemann since her death in 2019, and the first one ever to be staged in the UK. It takes up the challenge that her work set out: to put the body centre stage as a seeing, moving, thinking articulation that occupies visual, sonic, sexual and political space. The overwhelming impression of Body Politics is that this is a show of encounters. These range from those early paintings to the splintered gaze that come out of *Eye Body: 36 Transformative Actions For Camera* (1963), a series of photographs presenting Schneemann in the dual role of image and image maker. This is a show of many Schneemanns, far more than the one often encapsulated by works such as *Meat Joy* (1964) or *Interior Scroll* (1975/77).

The exhibition makes a fine job of pulling together Schneemann's art across all media, making a sense of them as freighted with contingent meaning rather than isolated pronouncements. She prefigured what performance, then live art went on to do: put the body of the performer in a central space of encounter with the outside. She used actions, happenings and ritual to do this, in the process making clear that living was a clangorous process. Schneemann's husband, the composer James Tenney, and cat Kitch (she never used the possessive pronoun to suggest Kitch was an object to be owned) are often witnesses and participants.

Schneemann's 1962 performance debut, *Glass Environment For Sound And Motion*, took place in New York under the auspices of The Living Theatre, a performance convened by composer Philip Corner and artist Dick Higgins – sound, outside Corner's score, was not integral to it. This came later, specifically with the performances *Chromelodeon (4th Concretion)* (1963) and *Noise Bodies* (1965). (Two contemporaneous works, *Music Box Music* objects and *One Window Is Clear – Notes To Lou Andreas-Salomé*, an oil painting which is layered with bits of fabric and magnetic tape spooling from its bottom, seem more to do with a charged silence.)

Noise Bodies used what Schneemann called the "own body sound system": she and Tenney wore outfits festooned with metallic junk to make a performance in which movement and touch were immediately translated into sound.

The most raucous work is the group performance *Meat Joy*. This is many things – an energistic ritual of bodies that sought, in a very definite carnality, to make meanings, but also, in its collaged soundtrack of Paris sounds and various pop songs, a piece that placed a sonic imprimatur on this business of living.

But Schneemann was much more than this single, iconic work. Body Politics testifies to her strong artistic involvement against war and animal cruelty; *War Mop* is just one of these. But there was also fun: the happiest part of Body Politics is the short section on 1972's International Carnival of Experimental Sound (ICES), a sprawling collection of events that took place all over London and, for *ICES STRIP/ISIS TRIP*, on the London-Edinburgh express train. Any artist who can striptease while reading aloud from Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* and then rollerskate up and down the length of an intercity train is not to be underestimated.

Louise Gray

Monheim Triennale 2

The Sound

Sonic Art in Public Spaces
June 3rd – July 1st 2023

The Prequel

The Next Generation
July 3rd – 7th 2024

The Festival

The Adventure Continues
July 2nd – 6th 2025

www.monheim-triennale.de

MONHEIM AM RHEIN

6—9 APR '23

The Hague NL

rewire

First artists announced:

Soundwalk Collective & Patti Smith
Fever Ray
Kelela
Godspeed You! Black Emperor
Lucy Liyou
Himera
Ellen Fullman & The Living Earth Show
Joe Rainey & String Quartet
Okkyung Lee's Yeo-Neun Quartet
The Maria Chavez + Mariam Rezaei + Victoria Shen
Thomas Ankersmit
Dwarfs Of East Agouza
Sélébéyone
Dienne
33 (Billy Bultheel & Alexander Iezzi)
Lucy Gooch
Moin
Nwando Ebizie
Patrick Belaga, Asma Maroof & Tapiwa Svosve
Pamela Z
Rainy Miller
Steve Gunn & David Moore
ABADIR feat. HOGIR
Julia Reidy
Rachika Nayar
LSDXOXO
Sarahsson
Osheyack
No Plexus & Emmanuel Biard
+ many more

carhartt WORK IN PROGRESS
FONDS 21
The Hague
FONDS PODIUM KUNSTEN PERFORMING ARTS FUND NL

For tickets and updates visit rewirefestival.nl

BIG EARS FESTIVAL

700 BLISS • ALGIERS • AROOJ AFTAB • AMADOU & MARIAM • THE BAD PLUS • DEVENDRA BANHART
CATERINA BARBIERI • ANDREW BIRD • BONNY LIGHT HORSEMAN • KING BRITT • CALEXICO • LESLEY FLANIGAN
BÉLA FLECK • BILL FRISELL • GROUPER • MARY HALVORSON • LONNIE HOLLEY • IBEYI • IRON & WINE • VIJAY IYER
RICKIE LEE JONES • CHARLES LLOYD • LOS LOBOS • JOE LOVANO • LUCIUS • CHRISTIAN MCBRIDE • MAKAYA MCCRAVEN
EDGAR MEYER, TESSA LARK & JOSHUA ROMAN • KEVIN MORBY • THE MOUNTAIN GOATS • MOURNING [A] BLKSTAR
BETH ORTON • PINO PALLADINO & BLAKE MILLS FT. SAM GENDEL & ABE ROUNDS • WILLIAM PARKER
MARC RIBOT Y LOS CUBANOS POSTIZOS • ALLISON RUSSELL • CÉCILE MCLORIN SALVANT • NATE SMITH + KINFOLK
SON LUX • TYSHAWN SOREY • CARL STONE • MORTON SUBOTNICK • SUN RA ARKESTRA • TANK AND THE BANGAS
TARBABY FT. DAVID MURRAY • KAE TEMPEST • THE WEATHER STATION • BRANDEE YOUNGER • AND MORE!

JOHN ZORN 70TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

SAE HASHIMOTO • JULIAN LAGE • BILL LASWELL • DAVE LOMBARDO • BRIAN MARSELLA • JOHN MEDESKI • GYAN RILEY • CHES SMITH • & MORE!

THE MUSIC OF CATHERINE LAMB, ANNEA LOCKWOOD & ÉLIANE RADIGUE

PERFORMED BY JACK QUARTET, NATE WOOLEY, YARN/WIRE & CAROL ROBINSON

THE BLUE HOUR

A SONG CYCLE BY RACHEL GRIMES, ANGÉLICA NEGRÓN, SHARA NOVA, CAROLINE SHAW & SARAH KIRKLAND SNIDER
PERFORMED BY SHARA NOVA AND KNOXVILLE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

ROBERT ASHLEY'S PERFECT LIVES

PERFORMED BY VARISPEED COLLECTIVE

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO NIKKI GIOVANNI

JAVON JACKSON & NIKKI GIOVANNI WITH NNENNA FREELON

FULL LINEUP AND MORE DETAILS AT
BIGEARSFESTIVAL.ORG

Berliner
Philharmoniker

\ Philharmonie

Strom

Festival for Electronic Music

Friday
03. Feb 2023, 8 p.m.

Saturday
04. Feb 2023, 8 p.m.

Our partner
Deutsche Bank

Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Kultur und Medien

Senatsverwaltung für Kultur und Europa

be Berlin

berliner-philharmoniker.de/en/strom

Wed15th to Sat18th Feb

four days of electronic music for the masses

ELECTRIC SPRING 23

Concerts - 19:30 @ Phipps Hall - University of Huddersfield

Wed15 : Yvette Janine Jackson
Thur16 : Volker Boehm
Fri17 : Viola Yip
Sat18 : People Like Us

Late concerts - 21:00 @ dai hall

Fri17 : Nacre
Sat18 : Wobbly

Creative coding lab meetup - 12 noon

Sat18 : CCL Symposium

All concerts are free to all!

supported by: ame HISS University of Huddersfield

Installation by Pete Batchelor

Showing in the atrium of the Richard Steinitz building throughout the four day festival

More details & venue info:
electricspring.co.uk

lofi spheres of speakers with moss classic post-acousmatic hyperactive videos sampling laptop feedback dress of loudspeakers

KINGS PLACE SOUND UNWRAPPED

Discover new sonic dimensions

Throughout 2023

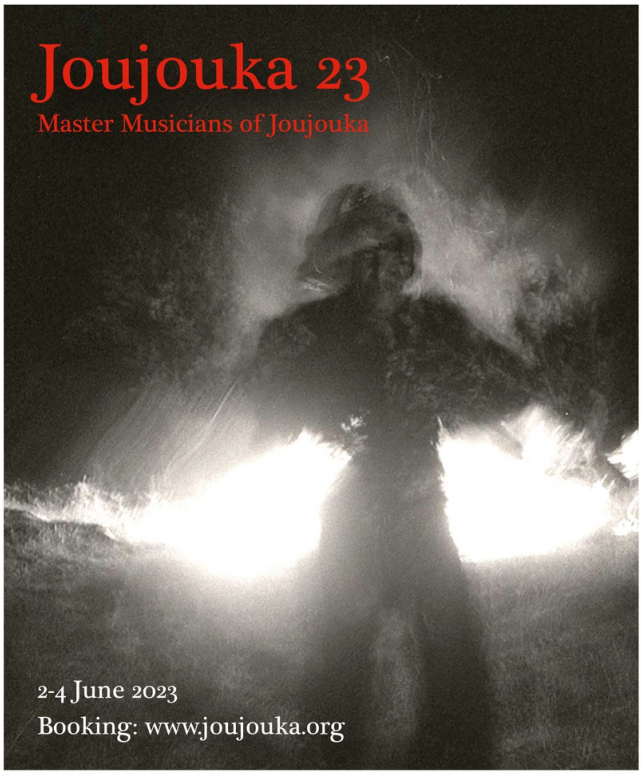
Artists in Residence

Hannah Peel & Space Afrika

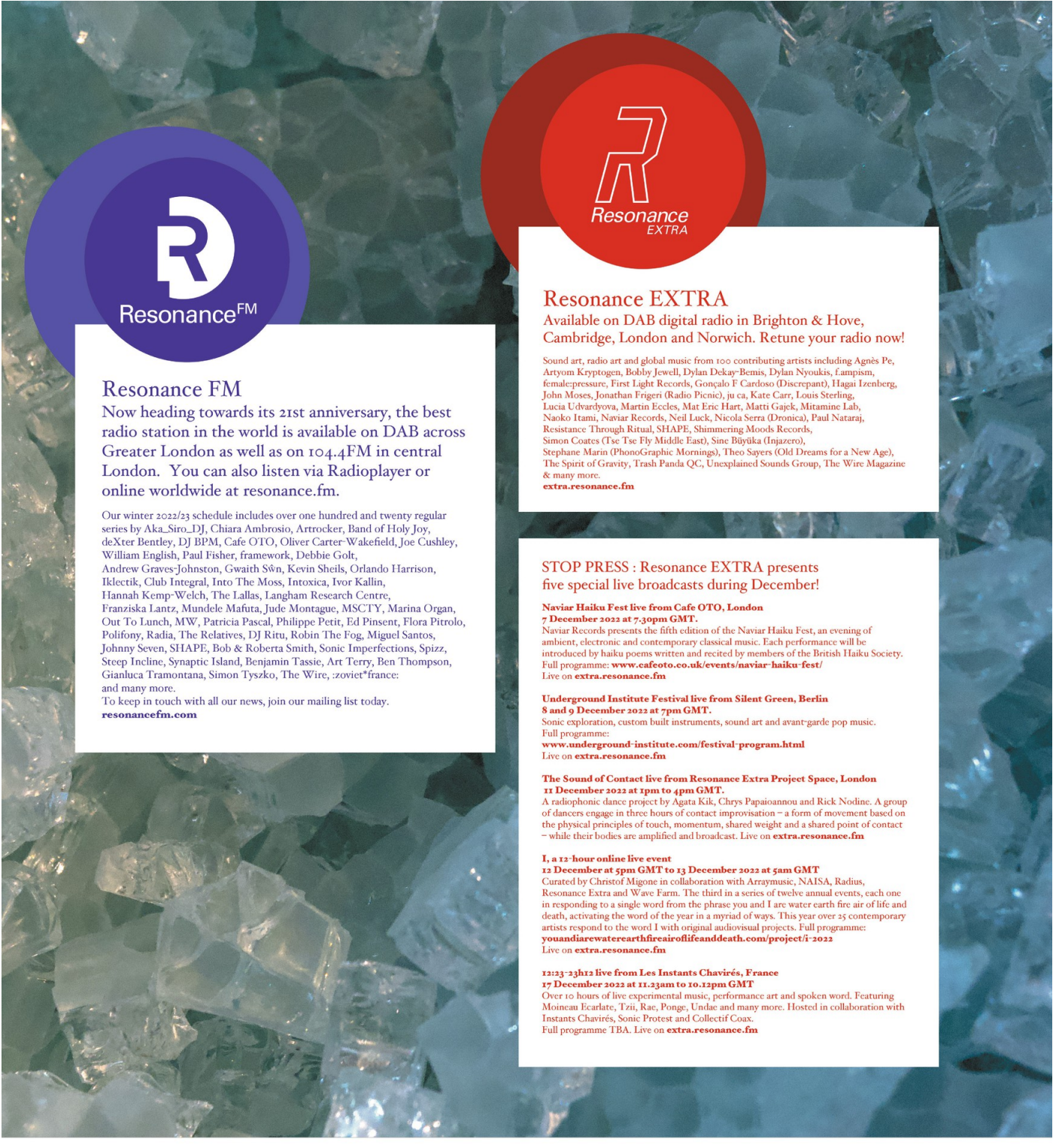
12 Ensemble & GBSR Duo | Félicia Atkinson & Chris Watson | Flock | Ghosted
Hinako Omori | Holy Other | Kaitlyn Aurelia Smith | Laura Cannell | Laura Misch & Sofie Birch
Liam Byrne | Lucrecia Dalt | Malibu | Manchester Collective | Marina Herlop | Midori Takada
Moin | NikNak | Rakhi Singh | Robert Henke | Salamanda | Shiva Feshareki
Still House Plants | Torus | Valentina Magaletti | Zubin Kanga | and many more

See all event listings & book tickets

90 York Way, King's Cross, London | **kingsplace.co.uk**



Sponsored by: Hamburg, Kampnagel, Elisabeth Karlheinz Behnke Stiftung, hamburgische kulturstiftung
Partner: Kurzfilm Agentur Hamburg, Reeperbahnfestival, Pianohaus Trübger
Media Partners: Byte FM, MusikTexte, Szene



Resonance FM

Now heading towards its 21st anniversary, the best radio station in the world is available on DAB across Greater London as well as on 104.4FM in central London. You can also listen via Radioplayer or online worldwide at resonance.fm.

Our winter 2022/23 schedule includes over one hundred and twenty regular series by Aka_Siro_DJ, Chiara Ambrosio, Artrocker, Band of Holy Joy, deXter Bentley, DJ BPM, Cafe OTO, Oliver Carter-Wakefield, Joe Cushley, William English, Paul Fisher, framework, Debbie Golt, Andrew Graves-Johnston, Gwaith Sŵn, Kevin Sheils, Orlando Harrison, Iklectik, Club Integral, Into The Moss, Intoxica, Ivor Kallin, Hannah Kemp-Welch, The Lallas, Langham Research Centre, Franziska Lantz, Mundele Mafuta, Jude Montague, MSCTY, Marina Organ, Out To Lunch, MW, Patricia Pascal, Philippe Petit, Ed Pinsent, Flora Pitrolo, Polifony, Radia, The Relatives, DJ Ritu, Robin The Fog, Miguel Santos, Johnny Seven, SHAPE, Bob & Roberta Smith, Sonic Imperfections, Spizz, Steep Incline, Synaptic Island, Benjamin Tassie, Art Terry, Ben Thompson, Gianluca Tramontana, Simon Tyszko, The Wire, :zoviet*france: and many more.
To keep in touch with all our news, join our mailing list today.
resonancefm.com

Resonance EXTRA

Available on DAB digital radio in Brighton & Hove, Cambridge, London and Norwich. Retune your radio now!

Sound art, radio art and global music from 100 contributing artists including Agnès Pe, Artyom Kryptogen, Bobby Jewell, Dylan Dekay-Bemis, Dylan Nyoukis, f.ampism, female:pressure, First Light Records, Gonçalo F Cardoso (Discrepant), Hagai Izenberg, John Moses, Jonathan Frigeri (Radio Picnic), ju ca, Kate Carr, Louis Sterling, Lucia Udvardyova, Martin Eccles, Mat Eric Hart, Matti Gajek, Mitamine Lab, Naoko Itami, Naviar Records, Neil Luck, Nicola Serra (Dronica), Paul Nataraj, Resistance Through Ritual, SHAPE, Shimmering Moods Records, Simon Coates (Tse Tse Fly Middle East), Sine Büyüka (Injazero), Stephane Marin (PhonoGraphic Mornings), Theo Sayers (Old Dreams for a New Age), The Spirit of Gravity, Trash Panda QC, Unexplained Sounds Group, The Wire Magazine & many more.
extra.resonance.fm

STOP PRESS : Resonance EXTRA presents five special live broadcasts during December!

Naviar Haiku Fest live from Cafe OTO, London
7 December 2022 at 7.30pm GMT.
Naviar Records presents the fifth edition of the Naviar Haiku Fest, an evening of ambient, electronic and contemporary classical music. Each performance will be introduced by haiku poems written and recited by members of the British Haiku Society.
Full programme: **www.cafeoto.co.uk/events/naviar-haiku-fest/**
Live on **extra.resonance.fm**

Underground Institute Festival live from Silent Green, Berlin
8 and 9 December 2022 at 7pm GMT.
Sonic exploration, custom built instruments, sound art and avant-garde pop music.
Full programme:
www.underground-institute.com/festival-program.html
Live on **extra.resonance.fm**

The Sound of Contact live from Resonance Extra Project Space, London
11 December 2022 at 1pm to 4pm GMT.
A radiophonic dance project by Agata Kik, Chrys Papaioannou and Rick Nodine. A group of dancers engage in three hours of contact improvisation – a form of movement based on the physical principles of touch, momentum, shared weight and a shared point of contact – while their bodies are amplified and broadcast. Live on **extra.resonance.fm**

I, a 12-hour online live event
12 December at 5pm GMT to 13 December 2022 at 5am GMT
Curated by Christof Migone in collaboration with Arraymusic, NAISA, Radius, Resonance Extra and Wave Farm. The third in a series of twelve annual events, each one in responding to a single word from the phrase you and I are water earth fire air of life and death, activating the word of the year in a myriad of ways. This year over 25 contemporary artists respond to the word I with original audiovisual projects. Full programme:
youandiarewaterearthfireairoflifeanddeath.com/project/i-2022
Live on **extra.resonance.fm**

12:23-23h12 live from Les Instants Chavirés, France
17 December 2022 at 11.23am to 10.12pm GMT
Over 10 hours of live experimental music, performance art and spoken word. Featuring Moineau Ecarlate, Tzii, Rae, Ponge, Undae and many more. Hosted in collaboration with Instants Chavirés, Sonic Protest and Collectif Coax.
Full programme TBA. Live on **extra.resonance.fm**

Registered charity 290236
(London Musician's Collective Ltd)
With thanks to all our Friends
and individual donors

WIRE
thewire.co.uk

ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

Contact us, make radio for us, support us:
Resonance104.4fm
144 Borough High Street
London SE1 1LB, U.K.
info@resonancefm.com

Out There

Forthcoming festivals, gigs, exhibitions and online events

NB events can be subject to cancellation or postponement. To keep up with the latest announcements and live streams from festivals, venues and musicians, follow @thewiremagazine on Twitter and sign up to our weekly newsletter at thewire.co.uk/newsletters

Officine

Wire supported events

Cafe Oto UK
Events at the North East London venue for experimental music include: Last Dream Of The Morning: John Butcher/Mark Sanders/John Edwards (6 January), Everywhere Is Haunted (8), Giovanni Di Domenico/Angharad Davies/Anton Lukoszeviece (10), Officine (11), Ex-Easter Island Head (14), Loré Lixenberg + Trevor Wishart (15 & 17), Extra Life + Karl D'Silva (16), Tomeka Reid & Alexander Hawkins (20), John Butcher/Ståle Liavik Solberg/Pat Thomas (29), John Dikeman/Pat Thomas/John Edwards/Steve Noble (31). London Cafe Oto, various times & prices, cafeoto.co.uk

CTM Germany
Berlin's ten day annual festival of experimental music and arts. The first programme announcement includes: Mayanne Amacher project, Authentically Plastic, Afrorack & Limpe Fuchs, Poulomi Desai, Puce Mary, Audrey Chen/Hugo Esquinca/Doron Sadja, Om Unit, Tash LC, Eris Drew b2b Octo Octa, and Maria W Horn & Sara Parkman. Plus Radio Lab winners Anna Kravets and Isuru Kumarasinghe. Berlin various venues, 27 January–5 February, ctm-festival.de

Iklectik UK
Events at the South London performance space include: Marjolaine Charbin/Phil Durrant/Jackie Walduck + Cath Roberts & Graham Dunning + Hans Koch/Jonas Kocher/Gaudenz Badrutt (12 January), Stanford Cheung pays homage to Japanese film maker Yasujirō Ozu (18 January), Academy Improvisers Ensemble (19). London Iklectik, various times and prices, iklectikartlab.com

Sons d'hiver France
Three weeks of creative music and avant jazz in the suburbs of Paris with Damon Locks, Amina Claudine Myers, Ava Mendoza & The Last Poets' Abiodun Oyewole, Marilyn Mazur, Joe Lovano, Ches Smith, David Virelles, Omar Sosa, Michiyo Yagi Trio, Fennesz, Abel Selaocoe, Moor Mother, John Medeski, Fred Frith and more. Paris various venues, 27 January–18 February, sonsdhiver.org

International festivals

Klub Katarakt Germany
Hamburg experimental music festival with Quatuor Bozzini as ensemble in residence, plus music, composition and improvisation by John Cage, Sarah Davachi, Éliane Radigue, James Tenney, Tanya Tagaq, Birgit Ulher, Christian Wolff, Sam Dunscombe, Alessandra Eramo and many more. Hamburg Kampnagel, 18–21 January, klubkatarakt.net

Norient Switzerland
Four days exploring global subcultures through film, performance, DJ sets and discussions. With curators from Uganda, Kenya, Colombia, India and Lebanon. The programme includes HHY & The Kampala Unit, and a set of AV installations themed around *Techniques Of Care* curated by Rebecca Salvadori. Bern various venues, 11–15 January, norient-festival.com

Winter Jazz US
New York jazz festival with Irreversible Entanglements, Sun Ra Arkestra, Adam O'Farrill's Stranger Days, Donny McCaslin, Halvorson/Courvoisier, Jamaaladeen Tacuma, Makaya McCraven, Sara Serpa's *Intimate Strangers* and more. New York various venues, 12–18 January, various times and prices, winterjazzfest.com

Special events

Evolving Soundscapes Italy
Music series within Turin MAO museum's Buddha10 exhibition focusing on artists from the Asian continent and diaspora: Rieko Whitfield + White Boy Scream films + panel (24 January) and Chinabot: JPN Kasai + Neo Geodesia live + panel (25). Turin MAO, until 27 April, maotorino.it

***The Rite Of Spring*/Common Ground[s]** The Netherlands
Pina Bausch's 1975 choreography for the music of Igor Stravinsky performed by a newly assembled company of dancers from various African countries. The Hague Amare, 12–14 January, holland-dance.com

Online & hybrid events

Radio Art Zone Online
The temporary art radio station which broadcasted over 2000 hours of original radio art has launched an online archive, including 22-hour blocks of programming by 200 artists such as People Like Us, Chris Cutler, Ed Baxter, AGF, Anna Friz, Dan Wilson, Otomo Yoshihide, Caroline Kraabel & John Edwards and Xentos Fray Bentos. Online, ongoing, free, radioart.zone

***The Wire* 50 Releases Of The Year 2022** Online/On Air
Germany's Borderline radio will once again be broadcasting tracks from each of the albums in *The Wire* critics' end of year chart. The broadcasts will be aired on Fridays 16, 23 & 30 December at 7pm UTC with repeats on Saturdays 17, 24 & 31 December at 11am UTC. Online, free, borderline-extra.de

Exhibitions & installations

City Of Kings: A History Of New York Graffiti US
Two part exhibition tracing the emergence of graffiti as an art form in New York, highlighting under-recognised artists and players. New York Howl! Happening (until 15 January) & Howl! Arts/Howl! Archive (until 29 January), howlarts.org

The Horror Show! UK
50 years of provocation in British art which includes pieces by Marc Almond, Gazelle Twin, Leigh Bowery, A Guy Called Gerald, Derek Jarman, Barry Adamson, Haroon Mirza, Drew Mulholland, Tricky, Scanner, Anne Bean, Cyclobe, Tai Shani, Jake & Dinos Chapman, Noel Fielding, Don Letts, Linder, Jamie Reid, Steven Stapleton, Laura Grace Ford and Poly Styrene. London Somerset House, until 19 February, £16.50–£12, somersethouse.org

Christian Marclay France
Exhibition by the turntablist and media artist which takes in works in sound, film, photography and montage. Paris Le Centre Pompidou, until 27 February, €17–€14, centrepompidou.fr

UK on stage

Auntie Joy
Workshop and concert on the theme of "secular sounds in a sacred space". With Christian Alderson, Faye MacCalman, Bell Ringers, John Pope, Sally Pilkington and Tyneside Improvisers. Ryton Holy

Vincent Ducard

first show: December 16th 19:00 UTC (20:00 MEZ)
The Wire
50 Releases
of the Year 2022
Borderline
Musik für Grenzgänger
worldwide audible via internet stream at
www.borderline-extra.de
in Nordhessen hörbar über
DAB+, Block 6A (digital) und 105.8 FM (analog)
Freies Radio Kassel

Cross Church, 28 January, 2pm–4pm (workshop), 4pm–7pm (gig), £10 adults, children/unwaged/on benefits £5/pay what you can, tinyurl.com

Avalanche Kaito
Burkinabe 'urban griot' meets Brussels post-punk duo with a self-titled debut album out on Glitterbeat and more dates to be confirmed: Bristol The Crofters Rights (26 January), Margate Elsewhere (27), Newcastle upon Tyne Cobalt Studios (28), Glasgow The Glad Cafe (30), Leeds Wharf Chambers (31) and London Shacklewell Arms (1 February). avalanchekaito.bandcamp.com

Big Joanie
Feminist post-punk trio on tour: Bristol Strange Brew (6 January), Bognor Regis Butlins Bognor Regis Resort (7), Southampton Joiners (8), Oxford The Bullingdon (10), London The Garage (11), Birmingham Hare & Hounds (12), Leeds Belgrave Music Hall (13), Glasgow Mono (14), Newcastle upon Tyne The Cluny (15) and Manchester The Deaf Institute (17). bigjoanie.com

Boat-Ting
The improvised music and poetry club on a boat on the Thames sails on with Dominic Lash on solo guitar + a trio of Roçio Bolaños on amplified bass clarinet, Panos Ghikas on viola and URT, and Nick Roth on amplified saxophone + a duo of Alex Ward on clarinet and guitar and Tom Ward on clarinet and alto sax. London Bar & Co, 9 January, 8pm, £8–£5, boat-ting.co.uk

The Cube
Music at Bristol's independent cinema and arts space: Phil Minton & Audrey Chen + Carnivorous Plants Trio + Arkade (9 January), Container & Will Guthrie + Tapsew + Palm Oil (12). Bristol The Cube, various times & prices, cubecinema.com

GBSR
Violinist Mira Benjamin joins the piano and percussion duo for a rare performance of Barbara Monk Feldman's *The Northern Shore*, and works by Eva-Maria Houben and Tim Parkinson. Cambridge Kettle's Yard, 19 January, 8pm, £12–£5, gbsr.co.uk

Godflesh
Justin Broadrick's long-running industrial metal duo with BC Green returns. London Venue 229, 20–21 January, 7pm, £35–£30, godflesh1.bandcamp.com

The Hermes Experiment & Shiva Feshareki
Chamber quartet perform music by Mira Calix, Stevie Wishart, Oliver Leith and Jethro Cooke, plus a new work by turntablist Feshareki. London Milton Court, 26 January, 7:30pm, £35–£15, barbican.org.uk

Hundred Years Gallery
Concerts of improvised and other music at this intimate London space include a matinee quartet comprising Clive Bell, Emily Shapiro, NO Moore and Douglas Benford. London Hundred Years Gallery, 15 January, 3:30pm, £8–£5 donation, hundredyearsgallery.co.uk

The Jazz Cafe
Upcoming events include: Plaid (6 January), Jan Jelinek (7), Jeru The Damaja (13), Jah Wobble's Invaders Of The Heart (19), Aswad (22), Lowkey (27) and Dennis Bovell presents "A Brief History Of King Tubby" (29). London Jazz Cafe, various times and prices, thejazzcafelondon.com

Loudspeaker Orchestra
The latest series of monthly themed concerts of music for multiple loudspeakers in different venues around London continues with CeReNeM featuring works by Aaron Cassidy, Pierre Alexandre Tremblay, Eddie Dobson, David Vélez, Geoff Cox and Sam Gillies. London St Alfege Church, 25 January, 7pm, £5. loudspeakerorchestra.org

The Rolling Calf & Pat Thomas
The trio of Elaine Mitchener on vocals, saxophonist Jason Yarde and bassist Neil Charles with guest Pat Thomas on piano and electronics play two sets combining group improvisation with texts from "revolutionary African-Diasporic thinkers". London Wigmore Hall, 22 January, 7:30pm, £40–£16.

Safehouse
Brighton improvised music monthly: Koch, Kocher & Badrutt Trio + Reflection Quartet. Brighton The Bees Mouth, 13 January, 7pm, £8–£6, safehousebrighton.co.uk

Sound Unwrapped
Year-long concert series exploring spatial dimensions in live performance including a 19 loudspeaker sound system. This month's concerts include: Colin Currie Quartet play John Luther Adams, Julia Wolfe, David Lang and Steve Reich (20 January), NikNak presents *Sankofa* (22) and Space Afrika present *Honest Labour* (28). London Kings Place, kingsplace.co.uk

This Friend Ship Is Sailing
Final dates for improvising quartet featuring vocalists Maggie Nicols and Odie Ji Ghast, plus Sam Andreae on homemade electronics and saxophone, and David Birchall on guitar. All gigs have arts and crafts workshops running in parallel with the music. Sheffield Access Space (21 January), London Cafe Oto (22)and Brighton Rose Hill (4 February). davidbirchall.neocities.org

TQLive
An evening of drones, loops and sound with Breather, Firas Khnaisser and Culver. Newcastle upon Tyne The Lit & Phil, 20 January, 7pm, £10 or what you can afford, tinyurl.com

Nik Colk Void + Finlay Shakespeare
Electronic dance music from the Factory Floor and Carter Tutti Void member whose debut solo album *Bucked Up Space* was released earlier this year by Mego. London Walthamstow Trades Hall upstairs, 20 January, 7pm, £9, ra.co

Incoming

Big Ears US
200 performances over four days in downtown Knoxville. With Grouper, Arooj Aftab, Bill Frisell, Tyshawn Sorey, Marc Ribot, 700 Bliss, Carl Stone, Makaya McCraven, Mary Halvorson, Éliane Radigue, Annea Lockwood, Catherine Lamb, Steve Reich, Terry Allen, Bill Orcutt Guitar Quartet, James 'Blood' Ulmer, eight John Zorn projects to mark his 70th birthday, William Parker, Steve Gunn, Lonnie Holley, Kali Malone and more. Knoxville various venues, 30 March–2 April, $850–$125, bigearsfestival.org

Rewire The Netherlands
International festival of adventurous music. First artists announced include Soundwalk Collective & Patti Smith, Godspeed You! Black Emperor, Ellen Fullman & The Living Earth Show, Sélébéyone featuring Steve Lehman, Okkyung Lee, Maria Chavez, Mariam Rezaei, Pamela Z, Thomas Ankersmit, Joe Rainey & String Quartet, Julia Reidy, Nwando Ebizie's *The Swan*, Steve Gunn & David Moore, Fever Ray and Dwarfs Of East Agouza. The Hague various venues, 6–9 April, from €95, rewirefestival.nl

Send listings two months in advance to listings@thewire.co.uk

A 2022 DISCIPLES COMMUNICATION

Niagara
Parva Naturalia

"Essentially spiky comp of the Portuguese trio's rarest and most spannered out-of-print 12" cuts." Boomkat

Model Home
Saturn
In The Basement

"Drifts and cruises across nine hallucinogenic-grade jams." RWDFWD

Suzi Analogue
Infinite Zonez

"Reshapes traditions, from rave to techno to footwork, into luminescent party tracks that celebrate Black artistry." Resident Advisor

Maxine Funke
Pieces Of Driftwood

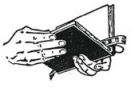
"Captures the natural homespun power of her quietly mystical creations." Mojo

Phew
Vertical Jamming

"Mind-expanding and power-enhancing; a real epic trip." The Quietus

99Letters
Kaibou Zukan

"Turns Japan's past into something to experiment with while letting traditional beauty bleed through." Bandcamp Daily



2022 on Karl

IANNIS XENAKIS
electroacoustic works
ALE HOP why is it they
say a city like any city?
AN MOKU/STEFAN
SCHMIDT zwischenraum
MIMICOF distant
symphony KONSTRUKT &
PETER BRÖTZMANN
dolunay GIULIO
ALDINUCCI real
ZEITKRATZER alvin
lucier / james tenney

KARLRECORDS.BANDCAMP.COM

hands to sarah hennies/greg stuart okkyung lee patrick shiroishi/kyle motl lucy liyou/yska charmaine lee/zach rowden haptic jacob wick/claire rousay

NOTICE RECORDINGS
late 2022

SUNIK KIM
Raid on the White Tiger Regiment

MALCOM GOLDSTEIN
FRED LONBERG-HOLM
Missa Amissa

DAMON SMITH
LOUIS WALL
NNN COOK
Fire Point

noticerecordings.bandcamp.com
@notice_recordings

FAR OUT RECORDINGS

JOYCE
with Mauricio Maestro

NATUREZA
produced, arranged & conducted by
CLAUS OGERMAN
The long-lost 1977 studio album
OUT NOW

ZA BRIS KIE
Independent Bookshop for Culture and Nature

Our topics
Nature & Ecology
Music & Sound
Self-sufficiency & DIY
Counterculture
Utopias
Occult & Strange
Psychedelics
and much more!

Books and magazines in German and English

Reichenberger Str. 150
10999 Berlin
www.zabriskie.de

Sounds of the Universe
Worldwide Record Store

soundsoftheuniverse.com

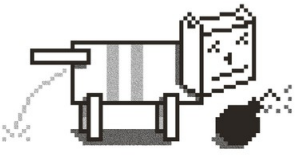
7 BROADWICK STREET,
SOHO, LONDON W1F 0DA

worldwide shipping

SERENDEEPITY

serendeepity.net

Corso di Porta Ticinese 100
Milano



BOOMKAT.COM

WWW.ALMASLAKH.ORG

RAMBLE RECORDS

Record Label / Mail-order

ramblerecords.com
ramblerecords.bandcamp.com

Ramble Records

releasing marginal music :

- psych / acid / outsider / freak pastoral Folk
- *American primitive Guitar*
- experimental Electro-acoustic
- *heavy psych / krautrock / spacerock*
- Indian Classical
- *free Jazz / avant-garde Jazz*

Europe Distro : *clear-spot.nl*

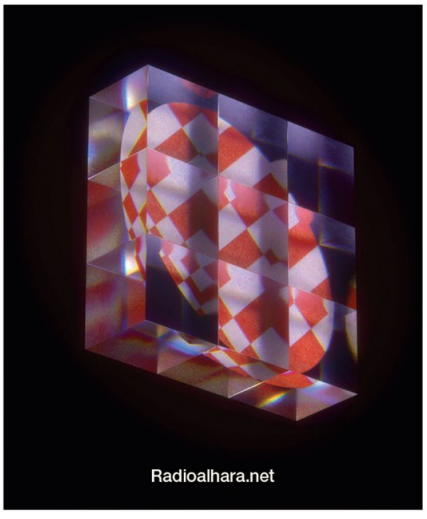
USA Distro : *lightenupsounds.com*

BitMapSounds

Improvised electronic, ambient, soundscapes
www.bitmapsounds.co.uk
bitmapsounds.bandcamp.com

Latest releases on Bandcamp

Access File
'The Space Between'
A.G. Flynn
'Rose Garden'
Mutations
'Echoland'



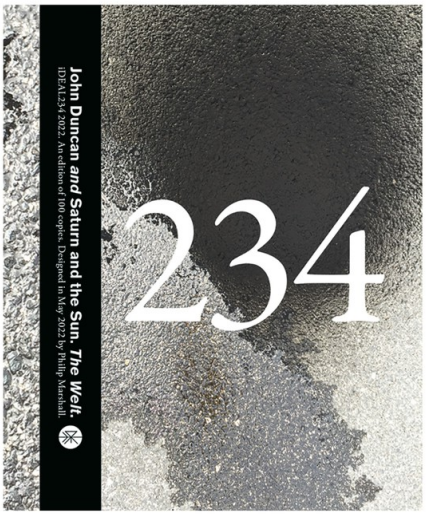
Radioalhara.net

NICEMUSICLABEL.COM

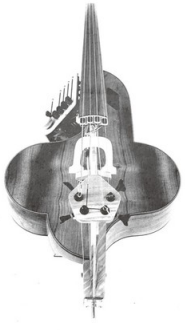
DISTRIBUTING SHELTER PRESS, BLACK TRUFFLE & MORE IN AUSTRALIA

NM047C
SIMON J KARIS
'TRACCE NON-FUNZIONALE'
CASSETTE/DIGITAL

A new 5 track release of weighty, microwaved techno workouts from NM label head SJK ahead of his next full length release in 2023.



halldorophones - for feedbacking strings



www.halldorophone.info

THE BEDROOM WITCH "A PLACE OF HURT"
OUT NOW ON 12" LP, CD, and STREAMING/DOWNLOAD

FOR FANS OF : KATE BUSH, SPELLLING, SRSQ, THE KNIFE

"The Bedroom Witch is able to bring us into her world so expertly because she has skill, vulnerability, and a keen eye for imagery. A Place of Hurt is, ultimately, a place of catharsis."
- Bandcamp Daily

on PSYCHIC EYE RECORDS and RATSKIN RECORDS
psychiceye.bandcamp.com | ratskinrecords.bandcamp.com

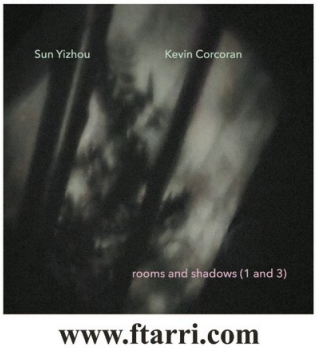
PSYCHIC EYE

Out Now

Sun Yizhou / Kevin Corcoran

rooms and shadows (1 and 3)

(ftarri-958)



www.ftarri.com

Sarah Ruth & Monte Espina
Cuatro Estaciones

Available Now
Full Spectrum Records
fullspectrumrecords.com

Subscribe to *The Wire* for one year & receive:

THE NEXT 12 ISSUES OF THE MAGAZINE IN PRINT & DIGITAL

A subscription is the most economical and effective way to get copies of each new monthly issue of *The Wire*.

Subscribers' copies of the magazine are sent direct from our UK mailing house by Royal Mail second class post in the UK; and by first class air mail to the rest of the world (including the EU and the US).

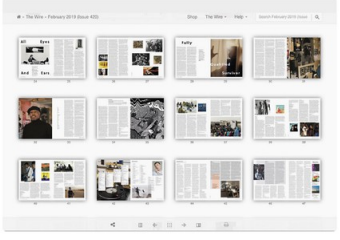
All subscribers worldwide also get instant access to the digital edition of each new issue as soon as it is published. The digital edition of *The Wire* is hosted by our friends at exacteditions.com.

DOWNLOADS & CDS

***Below The Radar* DL**
Compiled by *Wire* staff, *Below The Radar* is a series of compilations containing tracks by many of the musicians covered in recent issues of *The Wire*. The compilations are issued exclusively to all subscribers four times a year as downloads. New subscribers can download every volume in the series at thewire.co.uk/btr.

***The Wire Tapper* CD + DL**
The Wire Tapper is a series of compilations of new music that are compiled by *Wire* staff and issued to all subscribers on CD and download three times a year. All volumes in the series since *Vol 25* are archived at thewire.co.uk/the-wire-tapper and can be downloaded by all new subscribers.

*ACCESS TO THE COMPLETE ONLINE LIBRARY



The online library contains each new issue and every back issue of *The Wire* ever published. That's more than 460 issues and 40,000 pages of features and reviews going back to summer 1982 and the very first issue of the magazine. Membership of the library is free to subscribers. The library can be read on desktops and laptops or via the iPad, iPhone and Android apps. Each digital edition of the magazine held in the library is a facsimile of the corresponding print issue, and is published as shareable hi-res PDFs. And the entire library is searchable, so subscribers can locate every article published by the magazine since its first issue on favourite musicians, groups and genres. Full details here: shop.exacteditions.com/the-wire

DISCOUNTS

Subscribers get automatic discounts on all items in our online shop: thewire.co.uk/shop

UK £56
Europe £80
Rest of World £94

6 MONTH AND 2 YEAR SUBSCRIPTIONS ALSO AVAILABLE

DIGITAL-ONLY

Get instant access to the digital edition of each new issue, the complete online library of back issues, the complete archive of audio downloads, plus automatic discounts in *The Wire* online shop. shop.exacteditions.com/the-wire

£36 ANNUAL
£9.99 QUARTERLY

thewire.co.uk/subscribe | +44 20 7422 5022 | subs@thewire.co.uk

Read these articles and 1000s more in *The Wire* online library*

Anthony Braxton tells it like it is to Brian Morton
Issue 65 July 1989

Robin Rimbaud tunes into the UK's first experimental radio station
Issue 137 July 1995

Peter Shapiro on the new turntablists (class of 97)
Issue 160 June 1997

Roswell Rudd tells Val Wilmer about his encounters with Albert Ayler
Issue 249 November 2004

Rob Young on a landmark collection of Persian electronic music
Issue 285 November 2007

Frances Morgan on Carolee Schneemann
Issue 363 May 2014

Dan Wilson on the experimental music pioneers of the Victorian music hall
Issue 364 June 2014

Francis Gooding on Gaye Su Akyol
Issue 394 December 2016

THE WIRE APP

Read every issue of *The Wire* ever published on your smartphone or tablet

The app is the best way for subscribers to read *The Wire* on their smartphone or tablet.

To read the archive on an iPhone or iPad go to thewire.co.uk/app, or for Android go to thewire.co.uk/android, and download the appropriate app for free. Alternatively, search for "*The Wire*" in the App Store or Google Play.

Readers can also download the app and make in-app purchases to get access to each new issue, plus the complete online library of back issues, and all the *Below The Radar* and *Wire Tapper* downloads.

Epiphanies

Meg Baird finds her own way into the American folk tradition through "Black Is The Color" and encounters with Sheila Kay Adams and John Cohen

Sheila Kay Adams

Of the many musical debts I owe to my sister Laura, I'm especially grateful for her taking me to see a ballad singer for the first time. I was still a student at New Jersey's Rutgers University in the mid-1990s, absorbing the swirl of college radio. I was also starting to make connections between drones in modern experimental music and the sound – heard by way of Smithsonian Archives recordings – of our great aunt's dulcimer accompanying our great uncle's songs.

When Laura took me to see Sheila Kay Adams that evening, her voice broke through my fidgety, short attention span, almost stopping time. Through her closed eyes, her singing created a suspended state, offering deep glimpses into the stories in these songs. Her frailing banjo babbled like water over river stones. How was I even allowed to hear this music?

My sister had filled me in about the rarity of her work – how she was a seventh generation ballad singer from Western North Carolina, just as likely to be revered as unknown within the music worlds I was beginning to explore. But I wasn't expecting her otherworldly, stop you dead in your tracks electricity. Her ancient, prescient "Black Is The Color" prepared me to hear the Patty Waters version a few years later, sparking a personal reaction so powerful that I avoided treading too near it when creating a version with our group Espers some time later. Our recording was for fun and beauty's sake, honouring Jill Johnson's fragile, heartbreaking vocals and Clive Palmer's magic music history. It was a cover version we were singing back to the great wide wonderful world of records. Adams, though, seemed tapped into something deeper that you could only hope to point towards.

Laura and I each had copies of her *Spring In the Burton Cove* cassette. We both treasured it and learned many of those songs following along with the voice. With a few exceptions (usually within the safety of performing with Laura) I didn't take these songs into public spaces without working through an interpretation first – just hoping to point towards echoes of what I'd seen and heard.

A decade or so later, I followed my sister once again to a weeklong workshop where Adams was one of the presenters. As far out of my depth as I was, I took in what I could from the sublime to ridiculous corners that can make up gatherings like these. I took a few classes with the late, legendary John Cohen on Carter Family style guitar. I forced myself to learn alternate thumb lead picking in one afternoon so I wouldn't feel like a total disappointment the next day.

By this point, I'd seen Jack Rose working on his performance up close in lofts and small clubs, and this made what I was trying to learn a little more familiar and knowable. Cohen blurted a "That's it!" when my pattern jumped out for a moment from our class's strange composite performance. He often seemed, at best, tolerant of this typical workshop format, but he was engaged, animated and generous all the same. He described Maybelle Carter's finger style patterns like knitting – making them sound like the centre of something domestic, sprawling and cohesive all at once. With permission, I taped the classes, but the cassette disappeared long ago into the chaotic little environment surrounding the early days of Espers.

I went to another Carter Family guitar class led by Beverly Smith and relished her warm stories of growing up near Palo Alto and learning guitar from her older teenaged sister (who, if I'm remembering this correctly, had taken lessons from Jerry Garcia). I admired the way Smith would appear on campus in the mornings with dark, glamorous sunglasses after the long late night music sessions that dotted the open hillside where I also wandered each night, just listening in. It didn't matter that I didn't know how I fitted with any of it, or how far my own ideas and fascinations strayed outside the margins of this place. The ghosts of calamitous colonial history loomed. The music sounded alive, beautiful and homesick. The feeling of being part of something both sprawling and cohesive hovered closely over those evenings.

I had the honour of filling a class with Sheila Kay Adams that week as well. I even pushed through my typical shyness to speak with her from a crowd of students gathering at the end of it. I just wanted to thank her for that first, mind-bending performance of "Black Is The Color" and tell her how I'd never heard or felt anything like it before. I've been fortunate to meet people who meant a great deal to me both before and since, and have always managed to keep it together. But this time I fell apart at the seams, crying my words out. She was kind, knowing and generous, and gave me a hug. She told me it was OK, and to go ahead and make the song my own – an assignment I'm still working on.

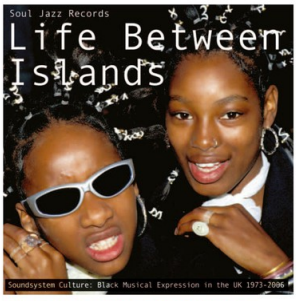
Not too many years later, Espers performed "Black Is The Color" at an event at Film Forum in New York where John Cohen was in attendance. The printed programme featured a description of our music that seemed hyperbolic. It hinted that we were at the leading edge of some evolved folk idea. I was embarrassed and remember hoping that Cohen planned to leave before we played. I didn't see him when the lights went up. There was something both sprawling and cohesive in that moment as well, but its centre was elsewhere.

Words don't really do justice to how these experiences stack up over time. Some things really can only be learned in person. Something in recalling these experiences is asking me to say this out loud. ☐ Meg Baird's *Furling* is released by Drag City this month

Shawn Miller/Library Of Congress

a Colourful Storm

SELECTED SOUL JAZZ RELEASES 2022

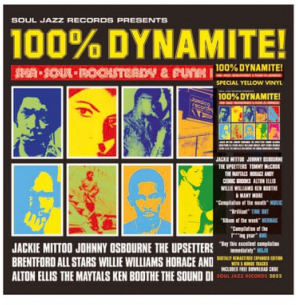


LIFE BETWEEN ISLANDS
SJR LP/CD 507

THE WINSTONS COLOR HIM FATHER SJR LP/CD 497

TREES SPEAK VERTIGO OF FLAWS SJR LP/CD 498

BETTY HARRIS
THE LOST QUEEN OF NEW ORLEANS SOUL SJR LP 345C

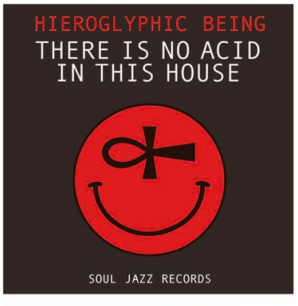


100% DYNAMITE
SJR LP 321C

PUNK 45 I'M A MESS
SJR LP/CD 505

STUDIO ONE CLASSICS
SJR LP 96C

STUDIO ONE WOMEN VOL.2
SJR LP/CD 502

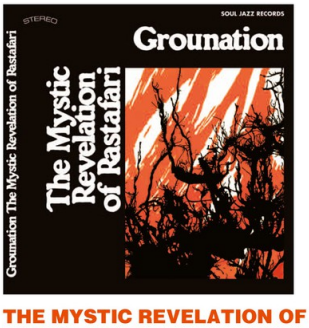


HIEROGLYPHIC BEING
THERE IS NO ACID IN THIS HOUSE SJR LP/CD 518

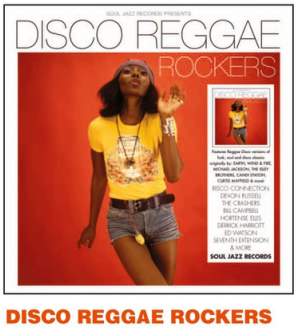
STUDIO ONE MUSIC LAB
SJR LP/CD 503

DEUTSCHE ELEKTRONISCHE MUSIK 2
SJR LP 494 RECORD A

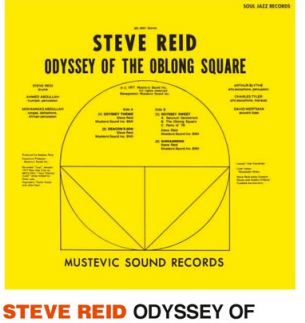
DEUTSCHE ELEKTRONISCHE MUSIK 2
SJR LP 494 RECORD B



THE MYSTIC REVELATION OF RASTAFARI GROUNATION SJR 495/LP/CD 488



DISCO REGGAE ROCKERS
SJR LP/CD 516



STEVE REID ODYSSEY OF THE OBLONG SQUARE
SJR LP/CD 514C

PUNK45THE SINGLES COVER ART OF PUNK 1976-80

SOUL JAZZ RECORDS
WWW.SOULJAZZRECORDS.CO.UK